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ABSTRACT

This collection of papers, nineteenth in a series of 20 documents completed by the Children's Environments Advisory Service for the International Year of the Child, 1979, reports on the proceedings of an international symposium held by The Child in the City Programme at the University of Toronto under UNESCO sponsorship, in June 1979. Delegates from 16 nations and a variety of disciplines explored the practical implications of how people can more fruitfully manage the scarce resources of urban space in the interests of children. Discussions focused on how to organize such planning: under what legal, political, and other conditions it can be done, and implications for children that have been documented from past intervention and research efforts. These topics are organized at various levels of scale, including housing, neighbourhoods, cities and regions. Contributed papers point to at least five dimensions that are recognized as crucial to the task of making environments humane for children. These dimensions are the developmental and personal, the spatial, the social systemic, the political and organizational, and idiosyncratic differences such as those related to culture, context and climate. (Author/RH)

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C A N A D A / M A B

REPORT No. 14

MANAGING URBAN SPACE IN THE INTEREST OF CHILDREN

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THE EDITORS' PAGE

This Canada/MAB Report is centered on the content of an international symposium, "Managing Urban Space in the Interest of Children", held in June 1979 in Toronto, Canada. The symposium was initiated by The Child in the City Programme at the University of Toronto and formally sponsored by the UNESCO Programme on Man and the Biosphere in coordination with Canada/MAB. The symposium took place in cooperation with the Canadian Council on Children and Youth, the International Playground Association, the International Year of the Child Secretariat, and the World Society for Ekistics.

Participants were nominated by MAB committees in their respective countries, according to criteria communicated by the organizers. Each participant contributed a paper; participants were joined by observers from cooperating organizations and from the local area. Participants and observers were divided among three working groups, each of which presented its conclusions for discussion.

The present publication includes material from all the papers, as well as the working groups. The first article, "Dimensions of the Task", gives an introduction and overview of the proceedings, referring to the individual pieces which follow and to the integrated picture. The logic behind the classification of these papers is also given there. The papers have been edited and abridged by the editors for the purposes of this report and for clarity of presentation. Although sole responsibility for the materials brought forward and the opinions expressed lies with the individual authors and the working groups, authority was delegated the editors for the precise wording, structure, and inclusiveness of these proceedings.

The Child in the City Programme was able to plan the symposium as a function of its basic support from the Hospital For Sick Children Foundation. The symposium received financial assistance and other support from the City of Toronto, Environment Canada in conjunction with the Canadian Programme on Man and the Biosphere, Harbourfront, McDonald's of Canada Ltd., the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, the Province of Ontario, UNESCO Paris, and the Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto. This publication was supported by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as part of the research programme undertaken by the Children's Environments Advisory Service for the International Year of the Child.

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MANAGING URBAN SPACE IN THE INTEREST OF CHILDREN

DIMENSIONS OF THE TASK

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In this introductory article, it is our intent to offer some indications of the concrete dimensions of an orderly, though complex, process whereby the environment could support children's interests, health and welfare more fully than at present. We will discuss the origin and the logic of the papers in this report. We hope, in addition, to represent in a more integrated fashion the pragmatic situation concerning children and environment made clear throughout the individual papers and in the proceedings of the symposium to which they were originally contributed.

Most societies are extremely ambivalent about children. Almost everybody recognizes their importance in principle. Children are the promise of tomorrow, the hope of the future, the only privileged class, and more. In many places, school budgets represent the single largest municipal expenditures, and great amounts of adult attention are devoted to traffic safety, playground design and other child-oriented concerns. Indeed, an International Year of the Child was conceived by adults and served as the focus of extensive considerations about the health and welfare of children. Such expressions, nonetheless, enter into an overall picture of ambivalence when placed in a more inclusive context. In Canada, for example, even at the same time that governments were proclaiming International Year of the Child, some were slashing the budgets of the main supportive services dealing with children, giving health, education and welfare the lowest priorities for maintaining even existing services in official budgets. Throughout many parts of the world, levels of immunization are starting to fall, and traditional children's sicknesses are on the march once again. Thousands upon thousands of children whose lot is the designation of refugee are allowed to die without world intervention. Even in many industrialized societies, few if any responses to children's needs outside home and school are evident, while in developing countries the situation of the child is but one among many pressing challenges to overcome with inadequate resources. The peoples of the world may unite in their love for children, but what have we done lately to offer realistic assistance?

The particular focus of the symposium convened was "Managing Urban Space in the Interest of Children". Urban areas are not necessarily better or worse than rural areas for children. Certainly there are virtues and problems unique to each extreme, and even the most precise scholars have failed to establish watertight boundaries for urban influences and urban lifestyles. Yet in the large and complex areas we call cities, which offer

so much potential for activities of all sorts, children have much in common with the handicapped, the elderly and various other "minority" groups.

1. They are small and weak. They often cannot push buttons, open doors, cross streets, step on conveyances, or operate mechanical devices.

2. Children seldom have much money, meaning that they cannot go about and do the same kinds of things that adults do, even were they big enough and strong enough.

3. Children are typically unable to influence urban decision-making and management, because they cannot vote, sue, or otherwise participate as legally autonomous. Only our compassion for certain aspects of their situations keeps them from being totally ignored - a condition of so many minority groups. This disenfranchisement of children and children's interests is becoming even more a concern now that demographic trends show that the percentage of children in the total population is declining in many countries like Canada, while the percentage of elderly persons is rising. As the proportion of children declines, voting citizens have started to show tendencies to cut back on their support for children to an extent which is even greater than the population statistics would warrant.

4. The urban environment takes on added salience for children when one considers that although planned largely for adults, it serves as the setting for the formative years in which children learn the habits and perspectives which stay with them for the rest of their lives.

5. Children have even more difficulty in dealing with the potentially hostile environment than do other minority groups in cities if only because their youth means that they have no prior experience in coping with their surroundings.

For these and other reasons, it is imperative for municipal officials, professionals, and the adult world at large to take up the interests of children in the planning and management of cities. This obviously will not happen on its own accord or through the independent actions of children.

A symposium was called at the initiation of The Child in the City Programme, University of Toronto, Canada under the sponsorship of UNESCO's Programme on Man and the Biosphere and in cooperation with such organizations as The World Society for Ekistics and the International Playground Association. Representatives attended from sixteen nations, reflecting a wide variety of disciplines, national situations and local circumstances. At the outset, it was made explicit in the structure of the symposium that delegates would address themselves through prepared papers and discussions to the questions of what should be done for and by children, which persons or groups in societies might optimally participate in the process of enhancing children's urban environments, and what resources and political, economic, and other structures would be needed for the effort to succeed. Such emphases were considered essential in order that well-meant concerns for the environment of children be eventually fulfilled in subsequent actions.

The papers can be viewed in terms of their contribution in a number of other ways. Various of the authors emphasize phenomena of primary concern to one or another level of aggregation concerning urban children. Such levels range from consideration about the individual child and its orientation to environment all the way to universal considerations linking children around the world. It would be highly misleading, though, to suggest by this organization that the message is thereby restricted to applications at the various levels of aggregation. The phenomena which must be considered when managing urban space in the interest of children are multi-faceted and interrelated with many other aspects of life. Such complexity may help explain the ambivalence of the adult world, not to speak of the selective and partial success enjoyed to date in attending to children's environmental considerations. We all want to do the right thing, but if doing it gets bogged down in detail and delay, hopelessly intertwined with or traded off against undertakings whose interests are more meaningful or profitable to other adults, good intentions accomplish only superficial or limited results, not comprehensive or deeply-rooted products or reforms.

In our opinion, our own work as part of The Child in the City Programme[1], the papers which follow, and the proceedings of our symposium point clearly and definitely to at least five dimensions which must be recognized and dealt with explicitly if the process of making environments humane for children is to succeed. Although these dimensions are widely recognized in principle, they have not generally been integrated into programmes of action. It is rather facile to "blame" adults for failing to take the necessary steps on behalf of children, but the ideas expressed in the symposium indicate that taking constructive, progressive actions must be seen as a very comprehensive undertaking involving a variety of complex concerns. We mean this recognition not as an excuse to postpone or discourage suitable actions, but rather as a realistic step in overcoming the web-like barriers to amelioration. Let us therefore sketch out these dimensions indicating as appropriate how some of the succeeding papers touch upon them.

1. Developmental and Personal Dimensions

Children go through successive stages of development which have important implications for what we should be concerned about in cities. We would like to list some relevant issues here.

First, it means that children fall somewhere in between nearly complete incapacity and the potential of adults, not only in terms of their physical growth and resultant abilities, but also in terms of intellectual, perceptual, personal and social development.[2] The implications of, for

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[1] See, for example, William Michelson, Saul V. Levine and Ellen Michelson (eds.), The Child in the City: Today and Tomorrow, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979, and W. Michelson, Levine, Anna-Rose Spina and Associates, The Child in the City: Changes and Challenges, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

[2] An excellent exposition of the relevance of children's development to architecture and city planning is found in Anne-Marie Pollowy, The Urban Nest, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania; Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, Inc., 1977.

example, intellectual and perceptual development are extremely important. Children do not necessarily have the ability to respond to dangers or to figure out solutions until reaching certain ages, depending on the matter in question. Studies have shown, for example, that it is not until the approximate age of eleven that the child can respond to traffic dangers as adults do, suggesting that no amount of teaching is sufficient if the dangers remain high.[3] On the other hand, if their settings can be designed so that children are protected from extreme dangers, they gain in confidence by gradually coping with other challenges around them. Personal and social development suggest that as children grow older, with whom they spend time and what they will do will change.[4] Activity usually becomes more specific, potentially more dispersed given the chance, and the kind of public space (like a playground) which accommodates what children want to do together at certain ages does not accommodate the same children at other ages.

The article by Fookes, for example, draws on Erik Erikson and Constantine Doxiadis to portray twelve developmental stages among children, which relate in differential fashion to fifteen levels of environment. A number of the papers, moreover (such as those by Hill and Friendly, Jacobs and Jacobs, Little, and Moore), stress that the particular spatial needs of children in different stages of development are not necessarily specifiable logically by adults. Children themselves assign and weigh the criteria by which they judge environments. Because adults are also at different stages, and pursuing different interests, they are often unable to see, let alone understand, the child's point of view and hence needs within the environment.

The work of these authors indicates not only the need to take developmental stages into consideration but to include children and their expressed views and perceptions directly in whatever processes are required to plan and manage urban spaces. Jacobs and Jacobs show that some adults can take the point of view of the child more accurately if they have relevant academic training. In many circumstances, however, there is more than one reason why it pays to have children represented directly. For example, one dimension of self-respect is the ability to exercise some degree of control over one's surroundings; children are seldom given this chance, which indeed hinders the development of appropriate adult attitudes towards environment. As Churchman points out, there should be every incentive for helping to develop such a feeling among children. We blame children for not respecting property, but Churchman, Little, and others make clear that the situation might improve greatly if we were first to respect children in the process of designing and managing the environment. Verwer cautions that children may be conservative in their design suggestions, because, in their short lives, they have not necessarily been exposed to a very wide range of possibilities. Nonetheless, it is the perspective and involvement of children which is most crucial to a successful process.

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[3] Stina Sandels, "The Scandia Report II: Why Are Children Injured in Traffic: Can We Prevent Child Accidents in Traffic?", Stockholm: Scandia Insurance Co. Ltd., 1974.

[4] Howard F. Andrews, "Home Range and Urban Knowledge of School-Age Children", Environment and Behaviour, Vol. 5 (1973); 83-86.

The incorporation of such a perspective may help illuminate the minority group, handicapped, disadvantaged status of children in urban design. Such a perspective would regard the scale of design necessary for children to cope with the urban scene. As we mentioned earlier, children must be able to manipulate successfully that which they encounter. Therefore, facilities must not only be on the "human scale" which Aldrich and many others point out should be a societal goal, but should be at a small enough scale for use by children (see, for example, the papers by Knight, Sharonov, and Verwer). A clear example mentioned by Churchman is the conventional stairway, which is designed for the average size and strength of the adult, not the handicapped, the elderly, or, of course, the small child.

Thus, children are both differentiated in development from one another and different yet again, as a class, from the typical adult. These facts of life must be recognized both in the design and in the process of shaping urban space.

2. Spatial Dimensions

Our recognition that children go through stages of development, interpreting and giving meaning to the environment along the way, has definite implications for the range of urban spaces which are relevant for design and management purposes. For example, as children get older, they gain an increasing ability to act safely within the home, the neighborhood and city, to venture over an increasingly wider range of territory, and to come into contact with larger numbers of people, though on the basis of increasingly more specialized interests. Hence, any particular kind of space typically provided for children, like a playground, is likely to be appropriate for children of only a limited age range, being too advanced for younger children, while too elementary for teenagers. Our concern for children must go beyond a few customary forms of land use and extend through a wide variety of details and levels of scale.

As we put ourselves in the places of children from birth to young adulthood, therefore, our thoughts focus on aspects of neighborhood and cities which are increasingly different from just home, school, church, and playgrounds, and which are often far removed in distance. We also find, all too often, that where these children spend their time is not planned or imagined as a place for children or youth.[5] Adults may be surprised when they find ten-year olds playing in parking lots rather than playgrounds. These adults often become angry when they find fifteen-year olds congregating in shopping centres, pool halls and restaurants. Yet these forms of urban space unintended for children reflect needs and desires that go beyond what children find formally planned for their own use. Where children go and what they do there is frequently a result of how they can get about and what is available within that range of territory which is appropriate for their age and interest. Everything that they use or could potentially use need not be made to order, any more than birds eat only cultivated berries;

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[5] Kevin Lynch, Growing Up in Cities, MIT Press and UNESCO, 1977.

yet to ensure positive nourishment, we must be aware of a wide range of opportunities, however created, which are appropriate for children's ages and interests.

These opportunities extend from inside the child's own housing unit, to common areas within multiple dwellings, to areas immediately adjacent to residential buildings, to larger play spaces and parks, to stores, to streets, to formal recreational or educational facilities, to places of employment, and, not least, to include the modes of transportation that can realistically bring children in contact with the opportunities nominally available to them. There is virtual unanimity among the participants that children play everywhere. Churchman goes so far as to report that playgrounds attract relatively few children beyond the age of five. Children old enough to go outside unaccompanied spend disproportionate amounts of time on the sidewalks, streets, and other areas of their immediate neighborhoods, whether in developing or industrialized countries. Verwer offers the example of the Dutch woonerf, an attempt to control design and movement within the entire residential area, so that children and other users can do what they need without substantial dangers from the mixture of people and vehicles. There was some agreement, confirmed by Aldrich, Churchman, and Hill and Friendly, that planning for children, traffic planning, and all other aspects of planning relevant to the local area need to be integrated, if only to observe the reality of children's movement patterns. Rosengren provides examples of such integrated planning from Finland.

Many contributors agree that formal play facilities represent only a small proportion of the spaces about which we must be concerned; it is nonetheless important to attend to Semeniuk's examples of just how many different varieties of play opportunities can be made available even within the formal range of the total spectrum. Indeed, the possibilities of formal play structures are very much greater than planners and officials generally recognize.

Contributors representing highly differing national experiences, such as Honark from Thailand and Hill from Canada, agree that more emphasis should be put on the distribution of smaller parks and play areas for children within the fabric of neighborhoods than on building relatively large scale, specialized facilities, suitable mainly for developing high levels of skill in specific sports. No one objects to the latter if requirements for the former are fulfilled, but it is all too easy to provide championship facilities for the few, while the many have nothing. One working group in the symposium stressed the desirability of juxtaposing the space provisions for various age groups within neighborhoods so as to foster natural intergenerational contact.

A number of contributors laid stress as well on the importance of integrating aspects of nature within the range of the urban child. Knight, Moore, Sharonov, and others stress the importance of exposure to water, natural hiding places, cultivation, and other aspects of natural systems for the mental and physical development of children.

The wide variety of uses of urban space for children was illustrated by one symposium working group. Without trying to be exhaustive, they put forward the following uses: shelter; work and play; health, safety and security; contact with nature; music, dance, literature and art; sports; education (broadly defined), attitude formation and the exchange of information; historical perspective; mixing of, for example, ethnic groups, ages, various social and economic levels, new arrivals and long-time residents; and participation in urban planning and management.

A final cautionary and advisory note is injected by Semeniuk and Utthangkorn. Many facilities and activities which occur among children in urban space cannot be expected to happen by chance. Attention must be given as well to such considerations as supervision and programme direction by adults or older children. As Wireman points out from American experience (others like Churchman and Semeniuk concur), some of these adult initiatives can come from emerging networks of neighbors who not only can help maintain or improve the viability of their local areas for themselves and their children, but who can derive some degree of sociability and support from working closely with neighbors on matters which are not highly personal. There is some agreement that urban ambience which is favorable for children becomes more favorable in the process for the adults who live there as well. Although our focus remains on children, the results of our efforts on their behalf may be expected to benefit the rest of the population.

One working group of delegates phrased the spatial dimension considerations another way by suggesting appropriate criteria for planning. In their view, urban children need

1. A safe and healthy setting;
2. Accessibility to the range of facilities and social groups within the urban area;
3. Suitable stimulation and challenge, including the opportunity to exercise relevant control over the physical and social environment;
4. Appropriate size of outdoor spaces, relative to the physical size and the physical, cognitive and emotional development of children (variety is important here);
5. Sufficient environmental flexibility and diversity.

In the opinion of the members of this working group, urban environments that meet these conditions will appeal to children and their parents.

3. Social System Dimensions

The papers also give unambiguous evidence of the need to consider the larger contexts in which children's environments are located. Certainly, for example, there is clear recognition that the concerns among those interested in children and their environments in developing countries are not, at this time, coincident with those which have already been

industrialized. Alam's description, for example, of the scale of concerns in Bangladesh contrasts rather starkly with the nature of the problems claimed by Swedner for Sweden, even if each is acutely aware of shortcomings in his own land. It is difficult to demand top priority for the provision of play facilities where pestilence, famine and war have not as yet been conquered.

In some cases, aspects of urban space for children are but subsets of much larger contextual phenomena which themselves require attention. For example, Fahmy's description of the effects of crowding on Egyptian children reflects a physical condition - crowding - which permeates Egyptian society. Honark focuses on the obverse of this problem when he shows how the system of land distribution in Thailand has resulted in a general unavailability of open space in Bangkok, for children or for anyone else.

Swedner's paper gives a graphic description of the influence of a societal phenomenon, stratification, on the nature and quality of facilities available to children. In a country which perhaps provides the highest quality and greatest variety of facilities and services for children, he nonetheless indicates how those amenities provided for disadvantaged or low-status groups are nonetheless distinctly different quality than those provided for others. Similarly in a country without the same material provisions, Honark makes clear that rich children have access to vastly different facilities than do the poor.

While there was no disagreement about the importance of attention to urban space which meets the interest of children, writers such as Esbensen and Hill and Friendly do caution that, among ultimate influences on children and their development, the physical environment must take its place in a broader set of influences including many very powerful factors like economics, education and social status. Even when people attempt to take appropriate steps in the right direction, furthermore, how far they succeed is at least a part function of the relationships of local groups to programmes and to bodies external to them; Wireman, employed by an arm of the American government charged with running programmes to help local groups, makes this point clear.

4. Political and Other Organizational Dimensions

As we indicated at the outset, adults who profess to love children often do not accord these children high priority when making choices among programmes and expenditures. As Semeniuk notes, the Planning Act of Ontario is meant to safeguard a number of concerns and interests but makes no mention of the child's right to play. Aldrich, Fookes, Hill, and Kiossoglou concur about the low priority accorded children's needs in such otherwise "advanced" nations as the United States, New Zealand, Canada and Greece. Delegates urged, in their discussions, the adoption of a conscious "pro-child" policy in every nation and culture (which would, as well, spill over to benefit many other segments of the population).

Many other interests, for example, now come into play in decisions about the use of land, and these interests have more political and economic power behind them than do children in most cases. Several authors discuss the outcomes of land speculation in this regard, where those able to make the highest bids can determine access to and use of land, while Sharonov advises that state land ownership, if managed intelligently, can serve as a better adjudicator of who gets what. Alam mentions that taxation policies can serve as an alternative means to the same end, to help prevent exploitation based on an initial ability to pay for land. Nonetheless, elevating children to a major priority regarding capital expenditures and other practices and policies requires an integrated commitment by many persons, well beyond specific sectoral practices.

A second aspect of the political and organization dimension asks who is involved when decisions are made that affect children. A consensus emerges from such contributors as Fookes and Kiossoglou that the formal planners and decision-makers seldom include persons with either empathy or sympathy towards children and their ongoing needs. One of the working groups concluded that people with knowledge pertinent to shaping urban space in the interest of children should be doing more, including: 1) raising consciousness by facilitating education and the exchange of information, 2) critically reviewing legislation, regulations and procedures (especially budget areas) to identify areas requiring improvement, and 3) participating in ameliorative action.

But besides the agreement that adults with more appropriate orientations towards children should play formal roles to a greater extent, there are many expressions of support for inputs by children themselves. Hill and Friendly, Jacobs and Jacobs, Little, Nicholson, Verwer, and others all indicate how vital information can and must come from children. Such contributors as Honark and Wireman suggest that the negative phenomena of vandalism and littering are likely to decrease with increasing participation by children and other formerly excluded groups in the planning process.

A real dilemma, though, is how persons with little or no prior experience in traditionally professional or political spheres can function positively with others in such realms. Jacobs and Jacobs, Raundalen and his colleagues, and Verwer all feel that one answer to this problem lies in the initiation of more relevant and thorough environmental education and experience. The Norwegian authors describe a case study in their country where children learn of environmental concerns because their families personally take the responsibility for neighborhood maintenance, a process other participants also found desirable.

Such participation by children, their parents, and others involved directly with children's concerns in the process of environmental design and decision-making goes well beyond the current formal level of commitment by public bodies to children. In most cases, this is represented by the setting of standards which municipalities are advised or forced to meet. In some cases, like the Swedish, the standards are very comprehensive and strict, even if the spirit of adherence can vary (Swedner's argument). In other instances, such standards are purely hortatory; communities are

shown ideals, but their adherence to them is not monitored, let alone required. Participants in this symposium described in their papers a wide variety of such norms and standards, covering facilities like daycare centres, the availability and location of playgrounds and parks, and the amount of space which some governments require be integrated into even private developments. The participants make clear that there will never be a finite list of standards for any one place, let alone agreement that any given set of standards is appropriate for nations in very different stages of development. Nonetheless, the research experience precipitating the establishment of certain standards indicates a certain amount of agreement in such diverse nations as Canada, Denmark, The Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, and The Netherlands. Delegates urged that municipalities and other governments review the legal underpinnings of child-oriented spatial standards, adding to them when inadequate and revising them when outdated. They noted in addition that legal training should include the various interests of children far more than at present.

Moreover, when dealing with either the actual planning or decision-making processes or when wrestling with the more formal question of standards, the persons involved need be broadly representative not only in terms of their age and interests, but in terms of the disciplines and training which (the adult) participants bring to bear. If the contributors have anything to say about it, the days when boards were all lawyers, realtors, architects, or politicians (and male!) are gone. The delegates themselves represented such fields as medicine, social science, planning, architecture, and government, and there was explicit recognition from such diverse contributors as Aldrich, Fahmy and Sharonov of the need for multidisciplinary cooperation and interdisciplinary work on the real world problems of managing urban space in the interest of children. Political science should be given emphasis, due to the need to document and deal with decision-making systems, particularly where the de facto informal structures differ from the de jure, formal structures. The world and its concrete problems are, after all, "interdisciplinary"!

But even with all the right people engaged in addressing the right questions, some differentiation of eventual roles is not only inevitable but in many ways desirable, according to the contributors. While writers like Kiossoglou and Wireman emphasize the necessity that parents and children become involved in the successful implementation of that which affects their areas, others like Hill, Semeniuk and Sharonov indicate the vital role that senior levels of government can play in providing both material and educational resources which enable those on the scene to carry out improvements successfully, such as support for children's activities or for parents to be able to help children. There is no requirement that the higher levels of organization involved necessarily be governmental units. Nic Nilsson, from the Swedish National Tenants' Union, gave graphic examples of how large-scale citizens' organization can provide some of the same stimuli as higher levels of government.

5. Idiosyncratic Dimensions

Our last dimension is a caveat, but a necessary one. Our contributors make clear that they do not believe in universal solutions for

problems which are played out on local scenes and rooted in larger local and national contexts. Alegre, for example, indicates how some concerns about crowding arising in other cultures appear very different to Filipinos, whose culture emphasizes physical proximity and personal sociability.

Climates are an obvious example of differences guiding alternative solutions to problems. Churchman, for example, stresses that many of her solutions do not stem from ways of thinking that separate her from such other participants as Raundalen, Sharonov, and Verwer; Israel simply has a different climate from Norway, the Soviet Union, and The Netherlands. Inclement weather is defined differently in different areas. What many of the contributors make clear, however, is that such weather should be recognized and designed around, rather than relegated to the depths of consciousness behind the minority of warm and sunny days. Hence, Raundalen talks about ways in which Norwegians design for outdoor play by children in winter while Sharonov gives plans for Russian conditions which inhibit going out of doors.

Alam addresses the need for actions on the behalf of children which are consistent with traditional culture, though what this culture is clearly varies from country to country.

The general point does not need belaboring. While a number of dimensions need uniform consideration in the interests of taking effective action on behalf of children, the exact circumstances bearing on the context for any given action will be unique.

In sum, the papers which follow have much to say about various levels of scale concerning children and urban space. Their import, however, and the input needed for effective action, requires recognition of and attention to no less than the five dimensions we have outlined in this introduction:

1. developmental and personal,
2. spatial,
3. social systems,
4. political and organizational, and
5. idiosyncratic.

We trust that we are to the point where such recognition of complexity is challenging and positive, and will lead to steps toward genuine improvement.

THE SOCIAL ECOLOGY OF CHILDREN'S NOTHINGS*

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* I am indebted to Gloria Baker-Brown, Donalene Hawes and Ted Palys for assistance in preparing this paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

About twenty years ago, a popular book on children was published, called Where Did You Go? Out. What Did You Do? Nothing. More recently, Polly Hill[1] has described the plight of one of the callers to a Hamilton, Ontario open-line show on family housing and children's play:

> ... and then there was the caller ... (who) had personally provided her children with everything - swimming pool and their own basement rec room - and where did they prefer to be? "Out, nowhere, doing nothing, with nobody". (Polly Hill, 1978)

It is these nothings of childhood that I find particularly intriguing, and that I wish to discuss below.

My general thesis will be that much of the richness of childhood is contained in the nothings of everyday life and that the elucidation of their meaning is critical to planning for the well-being of children. More specifically, I would like to use the theme of children's nothings to highlight some problems in assessing the well-being of young people, to provide a social ecological perspective (Little and Ryan, 1978, 1979) through which those problems might be interpreted, and propose a new methodological technique that attempts to circumvent those problems.

II. VARIETIES OF NOTHING: SWEET, EVASIVE, AND CRITICAL NOTHINGS

When children say they are doing nothing, they can mean several different things. I want to consider three of the most common forms of nothing that I have noticed in chats with children in my role as friend, father and psychologist.

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[1] See Polly Hill, "Orchestrating Action for Children's Opportunities for Play" in this report.

a) Sweet Nothings: Personal Codes and Symbols

Sometimes the things we say and do, the acts we carry out and the plans and projects we create are so personal, so private and subtle, that we find it difficult to express them publicly or to account for them in any formal sense.

The term "sweet nothings", of course, is taken from the domain of romantic discourse and refers to those often content-less utterances of intimacy that pass from the pursed lips of lovers. While not denying that some children may well utter these kinds of sweet nothings, I am using the term in a related but different sense. When a child is just kicking stones down the street, for example, or rubbing his hand on the car fender that he has just smoothed down for a coat of primer, then we can say that he is engaged in sweet nothings. These are pleasant, casual, seemingly inconsequential exchanges between children and their environments that give quiet delight but which, upon request for explication and rationale, appear frivolous or silly. One who asks a lover what he means when he says "honeybun" is less likely to get a discussion on bees and wheat than a red face and sagging desire. Romantic sweet nothings made explicit turn sour, and in an important sense, so too do the sweet nothings of children, unless they are elicited in an appropriate context by a receptive person. I would suggest that much of the pleasure that children get from living in cities is coded in personal symbolic terms that seldom get mentioned to anyone, let alone an experimenter or opinion pollster. I think that this effectively excludes a rich domain of information relevant to planning cities for children and that there are steps we might take to attempt to capture some of the more subtle shadings of children's environmental experience.

The child stands at the centre of a set of converging systems which a colleague and I have defined (Little and Ryan, 1978, 1979) as biological, social, cultural and physical-environmental. One of the problems with current approaches to assessing children in cities is that systems of influence upon a child are typically weighted in accordance with the disciplinary orientations of the researchers. Architects, for example, stress physical design features of cities; biologists emphasize the toxic effects of pollution; and sociologists, the impact of norms of non-involvement or the child's place in the web of social networks. Our own perspective stresses that it is the child who assigns weights to different features of the urban environment in his or her continuing attempt to adapt to it and modify it. Thus, a given object or event for a particular child may have particular symbolic significance because it lies at the core of the child's integrative framework. Even though it may figure as a minor object from the perspective of any given discipline, Jenny's kitten may be central to her particular way of integrating the multiple systems impinging upon her, such as the lack of social stimulation from friends (social system), or the adolescent growth spurt (biological system). It is these kinds of objects or events about which children often find it difficult to communicate. While "playing with the cat" may be an appropriate and easy way to talk about what Jenny is doing in her room, "smelling Kitrinka's fur and rubbing my nose up and down her back while looking at my brother through the soft white film of her fur" may not be. The former statement, because it seems to be inadequate

in conveying the emotional bond of the relationship, may never get said because it is too simple. The latter might remain unuttered because it seems so strange. So what was Jenny doing in her room last night? Nothing.

When we attempt to draw conclusions about the environments of children, it is mandatory to inquire into their own particular system of constructs. The sweetness of the nothings can only be assessed by using the child's personal constructs as indicators.

One technique for doing this is repertory grid analysis (Kelly, 1955, Ravenette, 1975). While this provides a very useful approach to eliciting personal codes of meaning, there is a tendency for grids to yield data in what might be called an overly adjectival form. The sweet nothings that children engage in are typically events, actions, and extended chains of behavior. We require here the elicitation of personally relevant verbs as well as qualifiers.

Let me now sharpen the issues we are raising with respect to the assessment of children's well-being. The following can serve as assessment goals from a social ecological perspective on children:

1. the need to examine the influence of the various ecosystems and environmental objects as subjectively weighted by the child,
2. the need to provide some assurance that personally coded material can be communicated (that it is not regarded as frivolous) and can provide a means for stimulating the production of such material (through metaphor, for example),
3. the need to provide opportunity for the child to encode his or her experience in idiosyncratic terms (both adjectival and verbal constructs).

I turn now to a few comments about a new assessment device, personal projects analysis, that appears to meet the above criteria and those to be considered in later sections. While the technique was originally developed for adults (Little, 1978) it has been recently adapted for use with children.

Personal projects analysis begins by asking the respondent to write down on the wide left-hand column of a multi-column sheet, ten personal projects he or she is engaged in at present. A few examples are given in order to indicate what we mean by a personal project (some examples from children are "doing my environmental studies report", "helping mom make the puppet", "not bugging my brother", "gaining five pounds", "watching my guppies grow"). Note that considerable latitude is given the child to write down any event over time that has personal significance. After listing the ten projects, the respondent then rates each on a set of scales (typically 1-10) dealing with, for example, enjoyment, difficulty, perceived control over the project, where it is done and with whom, and how visible it is. In addition, category schemes for content analysis have been developed, as well as a cross-impact matrix, to be discussed later, for looking at intra and inter-person project conflict.

With respect to "sweet nothings", project analysis may be helpful in two ways. First, the projects themselves may be sufficiently personal that the more subtle and affectively important aspects of the respondent's environmental experience are encoded directly. By giving many idiosyncratic examples, it is possible to get a fairly high rate of such projects with adults and, we suspect, with children.

A more intensive route into the domain of projects is provided by two ancillary techniques we carry out on projects known as right and left laddering, and personal symbols listing. Right laddering consists of asking the child to write down, in the columns to the right of each project, what steps or acts have to be performed in order to accomplish it. Left laddering asks the question "Why?" of each project; the child lists the reason for undertaking each. After listing a "why" (for example, he is playing football because he wants to be fit), the respondent is then asked to give a reason for <u>this</u>, and so on, until a terminal value or end-in-itself is reached.

With respect to sweet nothings, the second ancillary technique, personal symbols listing, seems most relevant. Here, we ask children to think of some things that they associate with a particular project, such as smells, tastes, feelings, music and visual patterns. One girl's project of "working on my environmental studies project" had a very rich symbol attached to it - the smell of chocolate chip cookies in the kitchen where she worked on the project for two weeks. Another child's major personal symbol for the project "playing hockey with dad" was "the smell of the puck". Indeed, this particular little fellow had developed an almost professional skill in sneaking in sniffs of the puck between face-offs.

Finally, we have older respondents rate each of their projects in terms of how prototypical of themselves they feel the project to be. Some children have projects which are really "them" while others seem alien. One interesting but very preliminary finding with adults has been that the greater the vividness of personal symbols associated with a project, the higher the person rated the project's self-prototypicality. Personal projects analysis, by tapping the personal codes and symbols of children, can contribute to an understanding of sweet nothings and the complex structure of young people's well-being.

b) <u>Evasive Nothings</u>

While sweet nothings might be said to involve the problem of ineffability, evasive nothings are things that <u>could</u> be talked about by children, but which they choose not to talk about. These are the nothings that cause parents to run upstairs to see what is <u>really</u> going on. Evasive nothings call attention to the fact that children's actions will inevitably come into conflict at some time with other actions, both of their own and of others.

While we may agree that conflict is a central issue in planning for children in the urban context, just how little our assessment techniques with children inform us about either such conflicts or the converse, project congruency, is disturbing. Measures of children's well-being typically

involve a single global rating on quality of life or satisfaction scales: whatever balancing which yields an eventual quantified score is seldom examined. Project analysis takes several steps in the direction of allowing the study of conflict between projects.

First, we can examine the conflict within an individual's own project system by having the child complete a cross-impact matrix in which each project is paired with every other one and the respondent indicates whether working on one project helps (+), really helps (++), hinders (-) or really hinders (--) each of the other projects. When the matrix is completed, it is possible to see the various nodes of conflict and congruency clearly laid out in the person's overall project space.

One of the most frequent causes of conflict in cross-impact matrices is that of transportation demands caused by the spatial segregation of projects (Martensson, 1977). In personal projects analysis, it is possible to index this by looking at the columns in which children list the sites for their projects and calculate the relationship between distance and perceived conflict directly.

Children will often wish to avoid talking about a particular project or action because they realize that it is in conflict with other people's projects, often those of an adult. A formal representation of such conflict is provided by project analysis in the conjoint project matrix. This consists of a matrix where across the top are listed one person's projects and down the side are listed another person's projects. Cross-impact conflicts and congruencies are then calculated as with the single individual matrix. Conjoint matrices can thus serve as a method for appraising the overall harmony of a set of individuals.

The matrix form of the project technique meets a number of goals of social ecological assessment in addition to those mentioned earlier. By looking at the relationship between the child's projects and those of others in the milieu, it provides a direct measure of the interactional nature of children's everyday behaviors. Traditional psychological measurement tends to look at such interactionism as a theoretical issue, but relies upon essentially irrelevant methodological procedures (like interaction effects in analysis of variance designs) for drawing empirical conclusions. Further, the interactions that are assessed are derived at a personal, individual level. They are not broad generalizations about "things" you dislike about your school, but rather concern how "doing your homework" interacts with "being a good friend to Wendy". By using projects which the children themselves suggest as being personally relevant to them, we end up studying relevant interactions systemically instead of irrelevant interactions mechanistically.

It might also be suggested that a very appropriate goal for social ecological assessment would be that the respondents to our data gathering instruments derive some benefit from the exercise. We have found that the procedure of going through the project's analysis itself seems to provide insight into some of the problems and perplexities of everyday living, certainly with teenagers, and, we suspect, with some younger children. One

of the strengths of the technique is the extent to which it leads directly into ameliorative possibilities for the respondent. Projects, for example, that appear to have an exceptional level of negative cross-impacts with other projects can be examined and re-designed together with the child. Projects that are in conflict with most of the rest of the family can be examined and possibly relocated or restructured to promote greater harmony. In short, project analytic methods provide a direct route into what might normally be called therapeutic or counselling activities. However, instead of seeing the child as having problems "inside" which cause him to be disturbed, we see the child as having management problems with respect to limited resources, which cause him to be disturbing. When these resources become seriously limited, another kind of nothing emerges, and this third kind of nothing takes us out one step from the child to the surrounding resource ecology.

c) Critical Nothings

While the question of whether it is possible to ever really do nothing will continue to intrigue philosophers of ecological persuasion, it is tragically apparent that many children suffer from limited resources. Their nothings are neither ineffable nor evasive, but real and critical.

A still-dominant trend within the behavioral sciences sees enhancement of perceived control to be a critical factor in improving the well-being of children. The condition I wish to place upon this enhanced sense of control is that it be based upon an accurate reading of the resources available, and the constraints operating within the surrounding ecosystem. Project analysis attempts to aid in the process of identification of resource constraints and possibilities by having each respondent complete a resource inventory which complements his or her project matrix. The resource inventories (separate ones for physical environment, human environment, and so on) get the individual to scan potential, unused resources which might aid in the development of his or her own project system, and in addition, to identify where possible project blends or exchanges might take place with other individuals in the same setting. While the development of this part of our work is just in the beginning stages[2], it appears to offer some promising possibilities for community development from the point of view of individual level project needs and resources.

The concept of critical nothings, then, has grown out of the observation that individuals are often put in positions of inadequate resources for projects that matter to them. It is possible to help some individuals discover resources (from foster grandparents to an unused swimming pool in Hamilton, Ontario) that are underutilized. The projects that are critical for other individuals, such as those in developing nations, are projects that are mandatory for the continuation of life (getting enough food, providing shelter). While it is ludicrous to think in terms of asking these children to write resource inventories, the scanning of resources available

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[2] In this respect, I should like to acknowledge the collaborative efforts of Ted Palys, Diana Sheng and Rosemary Doyle in working on the community inventory, human resource inventory, and general theory of resources, respectively.

both with and on behalf of them is formally identical. While recommending an approach to community development in third world countries, or in impoverished areas within industrialized nations[3], is beyond the scope of this paper, the presence of tragic nothings in the world of childhood brings me to my final theme - the necessity of enhancing a sense of interdependency between children in different parts of the world.

Children need to develop a sense of interrelatedness with their social and physical environments in order to safeguard their own well-being. One route trying to understand children's sense of interdependency is to determine their perceptions of what is right and wrong about their current milieu and what their conceptions of a utopian society are like. Some preliminary excursions into this area are briefly discussed elsewhere (Little, 1979).

Perhaps the central theme in attempting to come to grips with the problems of critical nothings in childhood is the necessity of taking the child seriously as the steward of our future ecosystem. Unless we are able to create with children a more nurturant attitude towards limited resources on earth, the critical nothings will transform themselves in a few decades into cataclysmic nothings.

One approach my colleagues and I are hoping to explore in the coming year is that of having children prepare joint-utopias with other children, first at the level of the neighborhood, then nationally, and finally, with a small sample of children in international collaboration. Our goal is to see what kinds of shifts towards interdependence might occur if children have to adapt their visions of the future perfect to the contextual realities of different perceptions, values and resources. Relatedly, the setting up of project exchanges between children in different areas, through a kind of pen-pal scheme, would seem to offer some interesting possibilities for enhancing perceived interdependence.

III. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

My goal here has been to try to show how children's nothings illuminate current issues in the design of environments for children. I have dealt with only a few of the nothings that children seem to have. An important kind of nothing that I have not had a chance to deal with is that which signifies a child's inability to see any importance in what he or she is doing. To say, "I've been doing nothing" can often mean that one's activities have been depressingly irrelevant and not worth the effort of explication.

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[3] It might be noted, however, that many of the procedures and principles we use in project methodology are used at the community development level by the Institute for Cultural Affairs, and that we see an integration of these approaches with a focus on children's needs to be a very promising possibility.

An additional goal has been to introduce both the social ecological framework and the project analytic methodology my colleagues at Carleton and I have been developing. It is our hope that we might make children's sweet nothings more communicable by helping them express their personal codes of meaning to us. We hope that their evasive nothings will be more readily communicated because the methodology we use is designed to help them with, rather than just inquire into, their personal projects and aspirations. And finally, we hope that the critical nothings of children will be diminished as imaginative techniques (not to mention political courage) blend to make new, perhaps unsuspected, resources available. At the very least, we can hope that this generation of children will begin to develop the sense of interdependency necessary to raise the next more effectively. If even a small portion of these wishes are met, then the study of children's nothings will have been something indeed.

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FINDING A WAY OUT

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* I wish to thank Harvey Jackins, whose excellent thinking has helped me to see how things really are; my husband, Kosmas, whose continual support and encouragement is making it possible for me, too, to find a way out; as well as all the others who shared their thinking with me and thus contributed to the content of this paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

"We live in a narrow space, like a cage", complains a retired primary school teacher. "It puts the children on edge. They can't play. We are like free prisoners. The only answer is to get out."

But how to get out? And where to go? The situation for children living in Athens has been described as "utterly unbearable": they have no places to play together, no space of their own.

Athens grew from a village of about 4,000 inhabitants to a city with a population of over 3 million in the 150 years following its designation as the nation's capital after the liberation of Greece from Turkey. It has had to accommodate sudden influxes of people: refugees from Asia Minor and other areas, migration to the city following wars and, since World War II, a continuous movement to the capital for a better life, an expectation which is now no longer necessarily being fulfilled.

City planning has served merely to create limits and norms. Most development has taken place outside the legal limits of the city. The result, a series of houses served by a minimum of infrastructure, is a spontaneous creation of the people, but any advantages are not very evident to the resident.

The problems we are facing include poor apartment design, with space for show rather than for living; inadequate building regulations and enforcement, resulting in a minimum of safety; and a lack of space both indoors and out. No provision is made for mothers of young children, who must manipulate push chairs and children up and down stairs and around every kind of obstacle on pavements, such as rubbish, steps, potholes, motorcycles and cars. Inadequate play areas or none at all, within walking distance; poorly planned or inaccessible parks, often with attractions that offer nothing constructive to the child; and very limited athletic facilities all create a

restrictive environment for children. Congested roads with no safe pedestrian crossings, even at traffic lights, make movement far from home frightening and dangerous for the most independent child. The lives of many Athenian children feature isolation in their apartments, lack of playmates, and little free time, even on Sundays. One chance of relief might be weekend outings, but hot, stuffy, crowded buses, full fare for children, and choked roads make even this unappealing. Often the alternative is to dress up and go visiting or to a café for ice cream. No one is satisfied with the situation, yet few consider it their responsibility to act in any way to improve it.

II. REASONS FOR INACTION

What stops us from refusing to accept anything but rational and thoughtful city planning and allocation of funds, and caring behavior? What stops us from seeing our children's situation clearly and demanding their rights for them?

a) Ignorance

I see two factors operating here.

1. We are simply not aware of our children's needs because we ourselves were denied a childhood. Many of us with young children were children in a war-ridden country. In Greece, World War II and the German occupation were followed by a civil war which had a devastating effect on those people who experienced it. But few children anywhere, even under the best of conditions, are allowed to be children - joyful, fully in charge, loving, playful, active, free, and not fearful of demanding their rights. Children thus grow up to be adults without a vision of how it could be, or how it really is.

2. A very important factor is that children's problems and needs are minimized from above. Those in power do not give children's needs high priority because their vision is clouded and confused. They are not likely to have experienced day-to-day living with children and, therefore, are not aware of the stresses imposed on a child and the person caring for him or her. In general they are men who feel that child care is women's responsibility, not the concern of governments or society. In addition, people who manage city finances or govern cities usually live in better conditions than the majority of the population, and so are out of touch with the needs of low income families while still believing that they can speak for them. Funding is directed into matters that seem more urgent, with apparently little recognition of the fact that the inhabitants, including themselves, are being subjected to a quality of life which is unacceptable.

b) Apathy

This, too, has its roots in childhood experiences. As children, we slowly lost our sense of power for at least two reasons:

1. We were never, except maybe in utero or at birth, in charge. Adults rarely really listened to us, or gave us responsibility. Our lives and surroundings were organized to suit our parents or the adults with whom we lived.

   The educational system perpetuates the oppression of children. We were not given a voice, we were punished for our mistakes, or for our attempts to take charge, rather than treated with understanding, and we were made to learn under adverse conditions, often out of fear of failure, in an achievement-oriented system. It is no help that those responsible for the education and care of young people have little status or sense of their own power. The feeling of powerlessness continues in military service and in our working environments where the established values, prejudices and personal proclivities of our employers and colleagues make questioning inadvisable. The home is usually the only place one can feel powerful, with little people as the targets, and they learn quickly that it does not pay to object to unfair treatment.

2. We had no models around us of adults taking charge. Few of us had parents, no matter how successful elsewhere, who demonstrated this in their role as parents. Nor did we see anything being done publicly on our behalf. An obvious example of this is women's acceptance of a submissive role. It is ironic that society entrusts its most valuable asset to the people it undervalues the most. The mother is usually passed over as being immature, a little dim, and inadequate in nearly every area, including finance. In most cases, she accepts this evaluation and goes about her day feeling unsure of herself and her abilities, playing down her achievements and her tremendous resilience in offering all she can to her family in the fact of little support. Until men get more involved with child rearing, to the benefit of themselves and their children, women will continue to be the major influence in children's development. It is crucial that they be encouraged to know their importance and to be proud and confident. The effect on children will be immediate.

c) Fear

Fear plays a major part in preventing action. Living in a country where once even a suggestion that things could be otherwise could have one put in a police file does not make speaking out easy even now. This fear exists to a greater or lesser extent in all countries. It is the fear of being the only one to demand, the fear of making a mistake, of failure, of being rejected.

d) Other Pressures

Many people are too busy trying to run households, to care for their families, to stretch their money to cover their needs, to earn money enough to live, or to live better, both of which can mean taking on a second job in the evenings. This leaves little time or energy for other activities.

III. COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

It follows, then, that in order for people to feel their strength, we must counteract their feelings of powerlessness, their conclusion that it is not worth the trouble to fight for improved conditions. Some achieve this by example. Such people can be relied upon to gather up a crowd of residents to protest a building programme; they continually demand improvements for their neighborhood; they often succeed. Although such activity gives hope, the need for action dies with the issue.

Community action groups draw large crowds by holding "happenings" which offer entertainment for all ages and discussions on issues of importance to the community. The aim is to offer an enjoyable and meaningful programme at which residents can meet each other and find that they share common problems and needs.

One woman encourages women to stand for election to their local school parents' association (these groups are officially concerned only with school maintenance) and gives them information they can use to improve conditions once they are elected. In this way, she is creating a pool of active and aware people who, in turn, can encourage and inspire others. She is now forming a women's group which will give support to these women and may help others to take the first step out into the community.

Many groups, however, are in danger of being a handful of aware people talking to each other rather than getting the message across to others whose participation is necessary for effective action. Sometimes, attracting people has had to become a goal in itself. Members have resorted to knocking on doors or starting up discussions in the local market. People are generally sympathetic, but do not participate. The response is often, "What's it got to do with me?" It is important, therefore, to find those issues which most concern the residents and to establish, by personal contact, the trust necessary to convince them that, working as a community, much can be achieved by the people themselves. A carefully prepared programme or plan from an active community is more likely to receive the sympathetic attention of a governing body than isolated demands by individuals.

The very fact that people are active and concerned makes it hard, perhaps, to see the difficulties of those who are not, but who are still dissatisfied with the status quo. Those who have the time, information and resources, financial and otherwise, to be active in a group may not be presenting policies and goals in a way that touches a chord in others who are less affluent, less aware, or living under pressures which are not recognized by the group. It is possible, too, that attitudes practised within the group make it unsafe for less educated or less confident people to participate.

What kind of people are those who gather residents together to fight an issue, who form action groups, or who stimulate others to become active? The men and women with whom I have spoken, who are involved in community action in some form, describe themselves as confident, unafraid, enjoying involvement in community affairs, accepting the challenge, and having

a clear sense of their rights. Add "loving" to this list, and I believe these are characteristics we would all like to have, and would like our children to have.

I wonder how many people with the information and the possibilities to act on behalf of their children or their community actually do so. As people working with or for children, we must examine our own attitudes and prejudices and refuse to give in to the pressure to conform or to be accomplices to the subtle and pervasive oppression of children and of other groups affected by the inequalities and prejudices of present day society. By demanding rational behavior from everyone, without giving in to the hopelessness, apathy and fears that will try to hinder us, we will be the models our children need to have around them. We will also be making an immediate start on correcting some of the distorted behavior and attitudes that our children come to see as normal. Therefore, I appeal to all, city planners doing their best, sociologists and psychologists aware and caring, politicians aiming to make things work well, individuals trying to create better communities, and progressive and loving parents: we must not bury our heads in the sand, we must confront injustice no matter how insignificant it seems, we must have complete respect for all humans and demand that respect from others for everyone. We all deserve the best.

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THE INFLUENCE OF HOME ENVIRONMENTS ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN

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In recent years, an increasing amount of research has been done on the topic of environment and behavior. At first this research was limited mainly to laboratory studies, which were designed to discover whether behavior observed in animals could also be found in human beings. More recent efforts attempt to reduce the theoretical deficiencies which limited the value of the earlier studies. Even now, there exists a dearth of studies aimed at producing concrete suggestions for the design of the built environment, including, for instance, recommendations for milieus which meet the needs of children.

In this paper, I wish, first of all, to take a look at the historical changes in children's living environments in order to challenge somewhat our present perspectives concerning the relationship between architectural structures and social needs. This approach seems particularly useful in dealing with the problem of crowding, which I shall go into more closely next. I shall try not to confine myself to mere observations concerning the socializing effects of architectural environment which must, of necessity, remain abstract; I will attempt to translate these into specific planning requirements for shaping children's home environments.

I. THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The area of space called home is often seen as the centre of human family life, and family life is seen as focused on caring for children. This appears to many people to be a quasi-natural condition, pertaining to all people at all times. This impression is, however, false. I would like below to correct this picture by making reference to several far-reaching processes of change in the last two centuries. The connections and interrelations between the socioeconomic changes in the structure of the household and the situation of the child in the family on the one hand, and the changes in the physical design of the living area on the other hand would appear to be of special interest. Characteristic living behavior patterns have developed at different epochs. The origin of these patterns and the way they have changed can be seen to be the result of socio-spatial socialization processes (Ariès 1975, De Mause 1976, Elias 1969, Zinn 1979).

a) Medieval Household and Living Structures

Living and working were not spatially separated from one another during the Middle Ages. The predominant unit then was not the family,

but rather the household. It often included a great many servants, day laborers and craftsmen. It is probable that the majority of the lower estates never achieved their own households. In these working and living communities, rooms were usually shared by everybody: master, mistress, family, servants and workers. Household members of all classes were, as a rule, together for meals, work, play and festivities, as well as when sleeping; this state of affairs was not considered a social problem.

Children were seen first and foremost as workers and potential inheritants. To regard children as emotional beings with specific corresponding needs was quite unknown at a time when a high death rate in children was normal. An upper class infant was typically given to a nurse to be raised. Children were in their parents' homes, if at all, only between 2 and 7 years of age. After this, children of all classes went into apprenticeship. For this period, the child usually moved to another household. Medieval daily life united people of all ages in every form of activity; no space was set aside as particularly for children's needs.

The rooms in which people lived in those times could be called all-purpose rooms. They were rarely specialized for different, specific purposes; they usually joined each other immediately without corridors or halls in between so that, in order to go into most rooms, it was necessary to go through other rooms. This spatial organization made the seclusion of one person or family and thus, aspects of life that we know such as privacy, individuality and intimacy, impossible. People in those days, however, did not feel the need for individual or family privacy, just as there were no places especially reserved for the public.

Until the 16th century, beds were often made to be disassembled, and were put together again in the evenings. The change in the 17th century to beds as solid pieces of furniture can be seen as a sign for the growing need for intimacy. This announced the movement towards privacy in the bourgeois family which brought the separation of the sleeping areas of family and servants and which later led to the separation of sleeping and living rooms.

b) <u>The Development of the Nuclear Family and Bourgeois Living Structures</u>

With industrialization and the rise of the bourgeois middle classes, household and place of work gradually ceased to be identical. The function of the home became limited to harboring the immediate members of the family. It now became possible for the lower classes to establish their own families and households, although for a long time a great number of them remained as servants in the households of the middle and upper classes.

The bourgeois family household saw itself as a "private" household. The family withdrew from the public gaze - a totally new way of thinking - and went into the seclusion of the home. Visiting friends or business partners without having previously arranged to do so was suddenly "not done". Modern etiquette, which was intended to protect the individual and family freedom from societal pressures, emerged. The urge of the family to cocoon itself away from society called for new forms of spatial organization. The layout of the bourgeois home changed after the 18th century. The principle of private space for the individual penetrated into the family household.

Single rooms were no longer planned as connected, all-purpose rooms, but went off separately from a hall. They thus obtained for their users a measure of independence and acted as shields against unwelcome or unexpected intrusion. At the same time, private areas were expanded at the cost of the rooms with representational functions.

The relationship between family and servants changed together with the emergence of specific bourgeois or middle-class dwelling and living conditions. The family living area was separated from that of the servants. Symbolically, the family now had a bell-rope in the living room. This was an indicator of the breakdown of the hierarchical society of the Middle Ages. As long as that social order had retained a high degree of legitimacy, physical barriers had been unnecessary. As the middle-class ideology of equal rights for all was asserting itself, any inequality still existing lost its legitimacy. Thus arose the need to demonstrate differences of class with symbols. Living in close proximity with servants was inconsistent with this need, so the middle classes reacted to the advance of the lower classes with spatial segregation.

The increased spatial isolation of the middle-class family automatically strengthened the ties between parents and children. The individuality of each child and the unfolding of his talents and achievements became even more important. All the same, it was not until the end of the 19th century that it became the usual pattern in upper-class houses for children to have rooms of their own in which they could not only sleep but in which there was also sufficient space to play and do homework. The further extension of this aim, a separate room for each child, was, even in the upper classes, only realized at the turn of the century. Probably, moral considerations led originally to the decision in upper-class homes to give daughters separate rooms.

There seems to have been a close connection between the new structural changes in living areas and the interest of the upper classes in bringing sexual life under control. For instance, even in the 18th century, the bed was still a focal point of society in the salons of the houses of Rococo nobility. The bourgeois, however, found this decadent, and banished beds to secondary living areas. They made a point of keeping all professional and social encounters free of any affectual and drive-related behavior. The whole sphere of sexual life was made private and was increasingly surrounded by a new type of psychological barrier connected with shame and fear of embarrassment, which eventually manifested itself in the form of actual walls for bedrooms. The taboo regarding parents' bedrooms, which has kept its hold from the 19th century until today, was supposed to delude children into thinking that their parents led a pure, sexless marital life.

There was considerable delay before the lower social strata took over these living patterns. Their living conditions were for a long time so unfavorable that they could not develop an independent family life in the patterns set by the upper classes. The housing of the lower classes usually consisted of one room with, at the most, a partition or tiny additional room. Cooking, living, sleeping, housework, and the work done at home for early capitalist enterpreneurs: all took place within these walls. These

people could not allow themselves a distinct emotional life, gentle habits, and other new middle-class virtues, simply because the minimum of space needed for privacy was missing.

The first to try to follow the bourgeois pattern of living structure were the lower middle classes. The symbol of this effort was the parlor, usually a very small but well-furnished room. It was only used on Sundays and for special occasions but nevertheless gave the family the feeling of living like those in better circumstances. The rest of the dwelling included only one or two unheated bedrooms and a kitchen, in which most of the family's time was spent. This pattern is still typical today for a large proportion of the existing apartments in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is gradually being superseded by the modern type of rental apartment housing built after World War II.

c) The Child in the Family and Home Today

The portions of households with children under 15 years of age has gone down in the Federal Republic to about 30% of all private households. The average number of children per household has sunk from 1.7 in 1871 to 0.6 in 1975. The family with children no longer represents, therefore, the typical household. The most typical family household is the small, or nuclear, family, consisting of parents, or one parent, and children. The kind of family in which grandparents or other relations are included now numbers less than 3%. The household which also includes one or two servants, common at the beginning of the century, has now quite disappeared.

Most of the social and economic functions of family households in earlier times have now been taken over by social institutions. Functional changes are still under way. It has only become usual in recent times for such fundamental happenings as birth, death, or serious illness to be experienced outside the home. Even in rural areas, the habit of storage for economic reasons has diminished in the last generation. In addition, new household machines have reduced the amount of effort needed for housework. Thus the home has become a synonym in every respect for privacy and intimacy.

Socialization of domestic functions is accompanied by a withdrawal of other, bodily functions (which could have taken place in public in earlier times more or less without shyness) into privacy. This change not only applies to sexual life, but also to most other vital functions. That the separate bath and toilet are now common in the home is the result of this development.

The most important social function which the family has today is the primary socialization of the next generation, that is, bringing up and educating children. On evaluating the suitability of the rental apartments built after World War II for the socialization of children, it immediately becomes obvious that the modern apartments do not come up to the level already achieved by the upper classes at the turn of the century. In that these apartments have large living rooms, functional kitchens, baths and toilets, they have taken over typical upper-middle class structures. The parents' bedroom and the small children's rooms, however, cannot be called

individual rooms in the bourgeois sense. Children's rooms, although now heated, tend to be just bedrooms, with insufficient space for play.

Research has shown that the smaller child needs both a play area for his or her activities near to the caretaker (usually the mother), and an autonomous, less-controlled, individual area, as well as the possibility of moving freely from one area to the other. The apartments of the upper classes were spacious enough to allow for this, and there was, at least, the combined living room-kitchen or parlor-kitchen (Wohnküche) in the homes of those in poorer positions, where children could always play near their mothers. Children went into the street for games needing more space.

The living room-kitchen was narrowed down to a small functional kitchen in housing built after the war. Space thus won became part of the living room. Unfortunately, this is hardly acceptable as children's play space. The room itself usually lies somewhat apart from the working area of the mother, and is usually a forbidden area because of its expensive furnishings. In consequence, the play area near the mother no longer exists in either rented dwellings or in most of the privately-owned houses of today.

Simultaneously, playing possibilities on the street near the house have been greatly restricted due to increased motor traffic. And, last but not least, the high-rise blocks built today do not exactly make it easy for a child to move between indoor and outdoor play areas. All in all, spatial conditions for the development of small children have hardly improved in recent years. It may be reasonable to suppose that many children today are quite strongly "disciplined" in the home as a result of its construction and design, which means that they are hindered in learning to act autonomously. Another reason for disciplining children is a heightened sensitivity with regard to any disturbance of the private sphere, especially any kind of noise from neighbours. This constitutes the main source of arguments in rented dwellings. In consequence, the demand for soundproofing has risen to an extent which would have been unimaginable in the last century.

Further changes can be expected in the future. It is not improbable, for instance, that still visible remnants of purely societal functions in homes will gradually disappear completely. The dining room, indispensible until a few decades ago in upper-middle-class homes, is now either integrated into the living room or is part of a multipurpose area not far from the kitchen. With this multipurpose area, the old living room-kitchen celebrates its resurrection, in its new guise as a second living area. Parents and children are so fond of this area because there it is possible to live daily life without being under the restrictions presented by the living room, which still strongly maintains societal-presentational functions.

In actual fact, the much-respected living room suffered a severe blow with the rise of television culture. Once more, children were able to gain legitimate access to this room. This was made easier in that it was no longer necessary to adhere to formal etiquette in staging stiff,

social evenings at regular intervals, as had once been so customary in the houses of the "better class". Seen objectively, it has now become paradoxical to retain the deeply-rooted practice of furnishing the living room as expensively as possible and keeping it fussily clean and tidy in consideration of some unexpected visitor. The question of how long this custom will be retained remains open. It does seem, though, as if a slow change is making itself felt, which would above all be of benefit with regard to the needs of children.

II. CROWDING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

These historical observations have shown that conceptions of the kind of space conditions positive for the development of children have changed much with time. Standards of education today, which put the development and protection of the ego-identity of the child first and foremost, would have been unrealizable in households in the Middle Ages. The fact that today, at a time when, at least in western Europe, the average living space per person is higher than ever before in history, so many families with several children feel that they are suffering from living "on top of one another", shows a serious change of outlook.

a) The Dwelling Situation of Young Families

The current legal standard in the Federal Republic of Germany is that each member of a household should have his or her own room. According to this criterion, young families with several children are indeed especially badly served. The standard is met, on the average, in 90% of all households. Apartments of standard or even larger than standard size are occupied by 99% of married couples without children. In contrast, only 86% of those nuclear families with two children reach the standard, as do 60% of those with three children, and of those with four children, just 29%, even though the kitchen is also counted as a room for these purposes. The situation for incomplete families is even worse. Summarizing, it can be said that almost half the children under 18 years of age today are living in conditions which do not correspond to standard. In low-income group families with four or more children, it is more than 90%.

There is, of course, a reason for this situation. It is precisely young families with small children in urban environments who constitute, by way of their socioeconomic situation, a most critical problem group. Housewives with young children are especially immobile. They are not only more strongly dependent on the quality of the spatial environment than other groups, they are also less capable of compensating for shortcomings of the home by spatial mobility. Income per person is not yet generally very high in young families, especially when the wife no longer has paid employment or can only work part time after the birth of a child. Seldom do people have great savings in this phase of life. It is more usual to find debts due to investment in furnishing the home.

For this reason, the number of young families who have their own apartments is also very low. Certainly, the number of families with

many children living in their own one-family houses in the Federal Republic of Germany is above average, but normally these people can only afford their own homes when their children have become so old that this form of living is no longer really necessary. When a young family has to move, either because of a change in place of work or owing to a new member of the family, the burden is excessive, due to moving costs and because, in their search for a new home, household members are limited to expensive, newly-built apartments.

b) The Effects of Floor Plan Design on Family Life and the Socialization of Children

The variable, "crowding", is, no matter how sophisticated its definition, still only a very rough and inadequate measure for the influence of the architectural environment on the socialization of children. Insufficient attention is given to the fact that a number of different solutions to the problem of designing a particular number of rooms can be found, even when the available space is limited. Different ways that, for instance, rooms for one person, those for group activities, and those for specific purposes, as well as the ways in which passages that connect them, and indoor and outdoor areas of the home are related (that is, whether they are directly or indirectly connected to one another, or are entirely separate), set quite different limitations on the ways in which family members are able to organize their interactions with one another. The scope of various possible interactions is further dependent upon whether the means used to combine or separate rooms are rigid and unchangeable or whether they are such as can be manipulated by the inhabitants.

It seems, however, that information regarding the possibilities for influencing family life by means of the organization of the floor plan is better known to architects and tenants than to researchers. At least I know of no systematic, empirical investigation into the connection between floor plan design and familial interaction. Even descriptive investigations as to the actual utilization of given floor plans are still relatively rare. We only have a great many interview surveys of little informational value, questioning tenants as to their degree of satisfaction with their apartments.

This deficiency is also found in studies about children's living conditions. It is not usually borne in mind that basically all the rooms the family uses, not only the children's rooms, are, to a greater or lesser extent, also used by the children. Children are no isolated group; "living" or "playing" always means at the same time an interaction between the child and the rest of the family and their friends. Architects will have to orient themselves to the character of these interactions within the family.

Below, I shall try to sketch some important principles for spatial planning in the child's living area. They are based on a non-empirical study which had as its aim the translation of sociological findings into spatial criteria for floor plan design (Baumann and Zinn, 1973). It is typical for the situation in this country that a journalist, in consequence of her own experience and much intensive discussion with mothers,

arrived at very similar conclusions and criteria; they are laid forth in her most remarkable and committed book (Dessai, 1976).

The relationship to the mother, who is usually the caretaker, is a determining factor in the primary socialization of small children in their first years. This relationship can be said to be successful when the child experiences security and protection, receives intensive emotional benefits, and learns to develop a personal identity, thus freeing himself or herself step by step from adult care in order to gain independence, competence, and autonomy in making decisions.

This process presupposes certain spatial necessities. The possibility for both child and caretaker to create and change both proximity and distance to each other in adjustment to their needs seems most important to me. "Proximity" and "distance" are key concepts in spatial socialization. These expressions are most ambivalent. Nearness to the mother usually means warmth, fondling, help and encouragement. This can, however, turn into unwelcome supervision and control leading to permanent interference and restriction of the child's activities. "Distance" can mean independence, privacy or freedom of action. But it can suddenly be felt by the child to be isolation, helplessness or despair. And in the adult caretaker, a loss of all hearing and visual contact can engender great uneasiness. The greatest benefits of both proximity and distance accrue only when both child and caretaker are able to keep control over the degree of mutual approach or reserve in every situation, adjusting proximity and distance as they wish, so that proximity does not necessarily mean interaction and distance does not enforce lack of interaction.

Whoever has watched children at play knows how short single play periods are and how often the place and the partners at play are changed. If the spatial environment facilitates this change of place, it helps, at the same time, the process of the gently growing autonomy of the child. In an appropriate setting, the child will start very early (at around one year of age) to remove himself or herself from the protective nearness of the mother in small experimental steps, in order to explore the environment. The spatial conditions are ideal when children can themselves decide the limits of their desire to pursue their own independence.

c) Deficiencies in Modern Housing

When evaluated according to the above principles, today's apartment buildings, especially, show many deficiencies. For instance, it is rare to find a play area that is large enough to allow mother and child to be close to each other without being cramped and to see and hear each other well. The kitchen is usually oriented towards the living room. But owing to its expensive furnishings and still existent presentational function, it is not possible for a small child to play there freely. Those toddlers who do so are constantly being cautioned to be careful, not to make the room dirty or untidy, not to spread their playthings around, and to remove them when they are in the way of adults.

Children's rooms are the smallest in modern rental apartments, offering, usually, only a minimum of space in which to play. In families

with several children these rooms are turned into overcrowded bedrooms, which can hardly serve as individual areas of privacy, and still less can be used as a communal play area for several children.

Children's rooms are often isolated. A room at a distance provides needed privacy for older children and gives small children the chance to remove themselves consciously from parental control now and again. But the separate children's room remains, nevertheless, unsuitable as a daily play area for little ones. The distance to the mother is so great that casual communication, without interrupting either housework or play, is impossible. The consequence is that small children are usually to be found near the mother in the kitchen, where they get in her way. On the other hand, if the mother makes them stay in their rooms, they try to attract her attention loudly and incessantly. As a result, the mother constantly runs between kitchen and children, or else punishes the children so that they become resigned to their isolation. This situation is especially unfortunate in row houses, where the kitchen and the living room are on a different level from the children's rooms, and the way to the garden leads through the living room, the very area which is taboo for children.

In today's apartments, the parents' bedroom is seldom protected from children's noise. Conflicts become inevitable when a parent wishes to sleep during the day, which cannot be avoided when a parent works in shifts, or is ill and needs quiet. Further deficiencies result from the relationship between indoors and outdoors. The semi-private transitional zone outside the door, which for the child is a most interesting experiential area, is often only attainable with great difficulty. For instance, the child may have to use a dangerous or anonymous stairway, or a lift, or have to go onto a street full of traffic. In addition, it is often difficult to remain verbally or visually in contact with the home. In consequence, the child can only go out with the help of an adult. Once outside, he or she either feels isolated or, if accompanied by his or her mother, constantly under supervision; when the child wishes to return to the apartment, he or she is once more dependent on adult assistance. It is mainly for this reason, in my opinion, that high-rise blocks are unsuitable for young families with small children (Zinn, 1975).

d) Planning Requirements

The above considerations result in the following suggestions for apartment planning:

1. In the interests of smaller children, every dwelling should have a multi-purpose room related to the kitchen as the main working area of the mother. This should be at the disposal of the whole family as a daily living room for group games, housework and handiwork which do not disturb others, for mealtimes and for daily communication. It should, especially, give smaller children the advantage of being able to play in as varied and active a way as possible while still being near the mother. Attempts to reproduce a modern form of the old living room-kitchen can occasionally be found in newer dwellings in the form of a small dinette. It is important that this area be kept apart from the living room, with its remaining presentational function and associated standards of tidiness.

2. Attitudes in western Europe make the formal living room taboo for children. It is usually kept for quiet parental use and for receiving guests. It should, therefore, be made smaller in favor of more space for the family room. In the dwelling, it should be placed so that guests can enter it easily without seeing the less formal family area.

3. Children should be able to retire into separate children's rooms whenever they feel the need. This need, however, varies according to age, so the spatial arrangements must be flexible. The individual rooms for smaller children should not be so small as to allow space only for sleeping, homework and games played alone, but should also make possible loud group games with brothers and sisters or friends, away from mother. This means that it is preferable, in smaller apartments, to give two smaller children one large room (at least $16m^2$) to share, which can later be divided into two single rooms, rather than to put them into small rooms with not enough space to play.

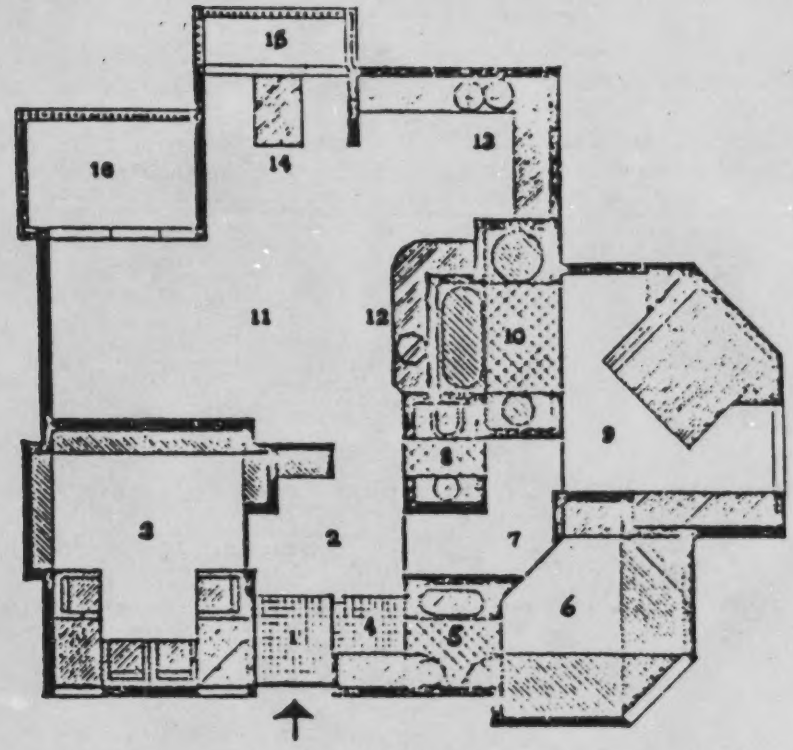
4. The requirements of preadolescents and adolescents differ somewhat from those of younger children. A part of their need to belong to a group is already satisfied outside the home. Inside the home, such a child needs a room which may, of necessity, be small, but which should be an autonomous, individual area, respected as such by the parents and, for this reason, separate from the other rooms if possible. Ideally, it should have its own entrance. The differing requirements of younger and older children emphasize the usefulness of children's rooms which can be changed in size and be divided into two by moveable walls and doors.

5. Generally speaking, the rigid relating of a certain family type to a certain type of housing should not be assumed in planning dwelling units. It would be equally false to assume a rigid relationship between certain uses, functions and furnishing conceptions and certain rooms. The various rooms should rather be planned according to the principle of "multi-purpose" rooms (interchangeability of the individual rooms for adults and children), so that the whole apartment can be used as flexibly as possible.

6. One of the most important demands included in planning today is for improved sound-proofing between various areas in the apartment itself, as well as to neighboring apartments. This aim can be realized partly by skillful planning of passage areas in the apartment, and partly by increased technical effort, for instance by insulation against the sound of footsteps. Low-rise high-density buildings are preferable in this respect to multi-story buildings. Inside the home, areas for quiet, individual activities and loud group usage should be well isolated from one another, making sleep, work and active children's play compatible with one another.

An example, shown on the following page (a plan by the German architect Ferdinand Tjaden), meets all the above criteria.

All the recommendations for spatial planning which I have listed can be realized without great expenditure, since they involve simply more skillful use of available space. They can thus be of benefit to low-income groups.



Alternative Floor Plan by Ferdinand Tjaden, Dortmund

The size of the apartment is 95.35 sq. m. Children can go by way of a preliminary hall (1) into the children's cloakroom (4) and from there into their own bathroom (5) and children's bedroom (6) which is related to the parents' bedroom (9). The parents have a direct entrance to their bathroom (10) and to a separate WC (8), which is also available for guests, who can enter it from the hall. Playing children (11) do not disturb resting parents during the day but have direct verbal and visual contact to parents in the kitchen (13), dining area (14) and housework area (12). Guests can enter the formal living room (3) without noticing untidiness caused by children.

Source: Dessai (1976)

May I note in conclusion that none of these ideas, of course, is really new. Good architects have always planned in this way. It is only that, today, there is greater uncertainty than ever before in recognizing good architecture and good apartment planning. For this reason, scientifically based criteria have become indispensable - even if, as a scientist, I repeatedly have the feeling of mainly uncovering wisdom which earlier generations have always intuitively known and used.

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SOCIAL QUESTIONS RELATED TO CHILDREN'S NEEDS IN TERMS OF SPACE

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In this paper, I discuss the nature and impact of crowding in Egyptian homes. In the first two sections, I briefly present some basic information about life in Egypt today. They serve as background for the third section, on crowding. In the fourth section, I offer some suggestions on how the structure and functioning of the Egyptian government can be adjusted to meet the problems I have described.

I. SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF CHILDREN UP TO TWELVE YEARS OF AGE

Egypt is a developing country suffering from a population explosion, a phenomenon which may be considered to be at the root of our national difficulties, with far-reaching consequences in both the social as well as the economic sphere.

Egypt's population, according to our latest census (1976), is currently estimated at 38.2 million, increasing at a rate of 2.3%. The urban rate of growth is 2.76%, the rural 1.97%; on the basis of an annual increase rate of 2.31%, the population is expected to reach 46.9 million in 1985 and 66.2 million in 2000.

As a result of this rapid increase, a high percentage of the population is 12 years old or younger. In 1978, it was 31.6% (11.8 million); the percentage of the population below 14 years of age was 42.9%, and those below 20 comprised 51.2% of the total population.

Such a young population has not only direct but also indirect implications from both socioeconomic and demographic standpoints. For example:

1. The larger the proportion of school age children in the population, the greater is the proportion of national income which must be spent on them.

   a) The high annual investments required to sustain educational standards make it difficult to provide adequate educational progress.

   b) An increasing proportion of the national income must be appropriated to face the increasing

needs for health services, housing, and cultural and recreational facilities.

2. The higher proportion of children in the population means a great burden on adults of working age, higher levels of consumption, lower levels of savings and lower levels of per capita income (128.1 Egyptian pounds in 1975).

3. Sooner or later, Egypt will be faced with the problem of unemployment, since these children will be ready for work after some time, unless the government tries starting now to create enough job opportunities to meet the future demand.

II. SERVICES OFFERED TO CHILDREN

The assessment of children's needs implies an evaluation of both the services given to children in Egypt and the efficiency of the organizations and systems entrusted with the task of meeting children's needs in the attempt to ascertain gaps and inconsistencies. In view of the above objectives, I shall try to offer a very brief summary of the services offered to pre-school and primary school children in the following areas: health care; education; and social, recreational and cultural services.

a) Health Services

Maternal and child health centres and school health units offer services free of charge in urban and rural areas throughout the country. As a result of these health services, there has been a decrease in the death rates for both infants and children under 12 years of age (see Table 1).

TABLE 1 - CHILD MORTALITY (PER 1000 LIVE BIRTHS)

	1954	1975
Infants under 1 year	137.9	89.2
Children between 1 and 12 years of age	66.2	48.3

b) Education Services

The right to education is one of the vital needs of the child. Children who attend primary school (those between the ages of 6 and 12) are by law the immediate concern for compulsory education. Both the number of classes and the total number of pupils enrolled have more than doubled between 1956-57 and 1976-77, mainly as a product of a rapid increase in the population eligible for primary education (see Table 2).

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TABLE 2 - EDUCATION

	1956-57	1976-77
Classes for children under 12	48,476	101,635
Pupils under 12	1.9 million	4.2 million

Although a tremendous effort has been made by the government, the pupil-teacher ratio indicates a high number of pupils per teacher (36) and a high class density (about 41 to 46 per class). These conditions result from the shortage of school buildings and qualified teachers; they can adversely affect educational quality.

c) Social, Recreational and Cultural Services (Provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs)

These services are provided both to compensate for the problems of some to offer more opportunities for all. Foster homes and residential institutions provide care for children in need. The number of day-care centres has increased from 724 in 1966-67 to 1,273 in 1977, as has the number of children enrolled in such organizations: 40,377 in 1966-67 to 72, 399 in 1977. Rehabilitation associations care for orphans and children whose parents are unable to take care of them because of illness, prison or the dissolution of the family because of divorce or remarriage of the father. Most of these organizations have teachers, workshop instructors, one or more social welfare workers, a part-time physician, and sometimes a part-time psychologist. Family counselling offices exist, but there are only twelve in Egypt. Each has a social welfare worker, a psychologist, and sometimes a psychiatrist. They aim to reconcile parental conflict, to guide and counsel youth before marriage, and to mediate between parents and children.

Athletic activities are organized through the National Council for Youth and Sports. Among the many activities offered to children under 12 are training lessons for sports (three lessons per week in schools), and summer camps in coastal cities. Children's clubs, organized through popular culture units, are found throughout Egypt. They provide games, books, films, plays, projects and stories for children under 12. They organize trips, parties and exhibitions of children's work. A special children's cultural centre in Cairo offers a variety of cultural services for children and helps them to develop their cultural abilities; it includes a special children's theatre.

The fact that the services and agencies I have briefly described are provided does not mean that children's needs in Egypt are satisfied; the opposite is perhaps true. Egypt is an overpopulated country, with a very low per capita income, which means a minimal quantity of goods and services per capita. High illiteracy rates combined with poverty still lead to high infant mortality, malnutrition and disease. A high divorce rate presents other difficulties for some children. Broken homes are the main cause for the great amount of juvenile delinquency and the large number of

neglected children. To all these factors must be added the high rate of child labor and the large numbers of children who either do not attend school regularly or else drop out (30% of all children six to twelve years old). Although there are thousands of schools and hundreds of social welfare and health agencies spread over the country, they are still too few to cope with children's needs. Services themselves are in most cases deficient in many ways and very poor in quality.

III. CHILDREN'S SPACE REQUIREMENTS: AN UNMET BASIC NEED

Throughout Egypt, homes and the areas around them are crowded. In this section, I shall describe Egyptian dwelling units. The typical child in Egypt moves back and forth from a crowded home to a crowded school through a crowded neighborhood. Because congestion in each exacerbates the inadequacies of the others, I briefly describe the situation in Egyptian neighborhoods and schools as well.

Egypt is suffering from an acute housing crisis which is due both to the rapid rate of increase (one infant born every 25 seconds) and immigration from rural to urban areas, especially to Cairo (44% of the population is considered urban). These phenomena are reflected in high population density (in Cairo, 23.737 persons/Km^2 according to the 1976 census), unfit housing for a substantial proportion of the inhabitants, lack of appropriate planning, inadequate services, water and air pollution, as well as generally unhygienic and poor living conditions. If we add large family size, which is the case in rural as well as in the urban areas (average household size is 5.2 persons), we can imagine the poor housing conditions of a fair percentage of the population. Only 45.7% of all households live in dwellings lit by electricity (72% urban versus 18.6% rural), and only 35.1% of all households are provided with a purified drinking water tap within the dwelling (30.2%), or within the building (4.9%). All these deprivations, accompanied as they are by overcrowding, seriously affect the socialization of children, and can lead to friction and to emotional and behavioral problems.

Overcrowding in the dwelling makes internal spatial arrangements difficult, and multiple usage of each room an obligation. Rooms serve as places for sleeping, eating, cooking, washing and drying clothes, and receiving visitors, as well as places where children study and spend time. Every space available, except the sleeping area, is fully utilized by the household members in their everyday activities. In poor and slum areas, the front door and the streets are considered as extensions of the house where many activities and social networks are located. In this atmosphere, children are deprived of any private indoor space; there are no places assigned to children either for their sleeping or for their studying. They sleep and study where they can, and are sent into the streets to play.

All surveys done in Egypt on housing in poor areas and in uncontrolled settlements have shown that most of the complaints and housekeeping difficulties of those who live in typical modest homes are caused, directly or indirectly, by too little space. The average new unit has been getting

steadily smaller, and in a shortage period, people take what they can find. The Egyptian government, since the National Revolution of 1952, has taken the initiative in building public housing for low income families. The standards they have established follow.

1. Public housing must be provided according to the following proportions:

   a) 28%: one-room dwellings of between 30 and 40 square meters;

   b) 48%: two-room dwellings of between 40 and 60 square meters;

   c) 24%: three-room dwellings of between 65 and 75 square meters.

2. Each new unit must have a living room, a bathroom, a kitchen and a balcony.

3. Minimum space per room: 11 square meters.

4. Bathroom: 2.20 square meters.

5. Kitchen: 2.80 square meters.

6. Windows: 25% of the outside wall area.

7. Height of doors: 2.40 meters.

8. Height of ceilings: 2.70 meters.

9. Stair width: at least 1.20 meters.

If we consider some of the public housing built in Helwan (south of Cairo), for instance, we will note that the project is planned on an area of 12.6 hectares and accommodates a population density of 400 persons per feddom or per 0.4 hectares. The whole area is divided as follows:

built area	40%	4.2 m^2/person
public services	10%	0.8 m^2/person
streets	30%	2.52 m^2/person
open spaces	20%	1.68 m^2/person

The whole planned area provides 9m^2/person, which is far below any standard. Children are crowded in their dwelling units where they do not have the opportunity, for example, to study, to do homework, or to play. In spite of limited indoor space as well as serious overcrowding, new units have been growing smaller and smaller. Children cannot find enough space for play in their neighborhoods, either. The issue of open space standards is a social question of as much basic importance to city planning as housing design.

Primary schools, moreover, are so overcrowded that standards of education are seriously affected. Reports of the Ministry of Education disclose that some classes in Cairo are attended by more than 60 children.

The actual standard for primary school construction allocates 2000m^2 or 0.2 hectare. For a three-storey school with 18 classes, the standard allows an area in the building of 1.2 m^2 per pupil. Many of the new classrooms, however, are built on the grounds of the old schools; under the pressure of the large school population, rooms assigned for library and extracurricular activities are turned into classrooms, thus diminishing the facilities and activities available. It is obvious that all efforts to improve the quality of education through better curricula, teaching and evaluation methods can be diminished by the large size of classes or bad school buildings.

The government has made an effort in this regard. The new master plan of Ismaileya City proposes an area of one hectare for each primary school, on the basis that in the year 2000 we shall have 150 children of primary school age for every 1000 inhabitants; each school will serve a population of 4000, and have 600 primary places, divided into 18 classes of 33 pupils each. In the same spirit, the master plan for greater Cairo proposes 0.8 hectare per 1000 inhabitants for recreational facilities; sports clubs and school playgrounds are excluded.

IV. KINDS OF ORGANIZATIONS NEEDED

I believe that the government of Egypt is aware of the importance of children as the promise of a better future. Several organizations on the national level already handle their problems. In my opinion, children's problems and needs cut across many different fields of expertise: social, economic, political, technical, aesthetic, administrative. Consequently, they require an integrated approach:

1. continuous teamwork among the various research disciplines concerned,
2. active collaboration between researchers and decision-makers,
3. fresh aesthetic solutions.

On the national level, it is of primary importance to have:

1. A national committee for the assessment of children's needs including city planners, architects, economists, sociologists, psychologists, lawyers, administrators and population counsellors, supervised by the Minister of Youth (a member of the cabinet).
2. Attached to this body and working in a very close relationship to it, an efficient and permanent multidisciplinary research team which must have an independent budget to undertake investigations appropriate for providing the national committee with all the data they might need.

The national committee would submit to the cabinet a National Five-Year Plan concerning the assessment of children's needs which would be discussed in the popular assembly and approved by its members (the representatives of the people). Each province would then implement, through its city council, the general policy approved by the assembly, and would have the latitude to make changes within the framework of the policy according to its own circumstances.

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CHILDREN IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS:

THE ISRAELI EXPERIENCE

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The framework for this paper lies within the field of environmental psychology. Thus, the focus is upon the interactions between children and their physical environment as it is built and interpreted by the social environment. The basic assumption is that this physical environment is a meaningful aspect within the totality of children's experiences; as such, it must be so constituted as to facilitate the fulfilment of their needs, and make a positive contribution to their development.

Children on the whole live in environments created by adults either for other adults or with adult conceptions of what the needs and preferences of children are. Unfortunately, this has often led to a serious lack of fit between children and their environments. The ramifications of this lack of fit are wider than might at first be obvious. First and foremost, a situation arises in which the fulfilment of various needs, while not prevented, is made more difficult for children. This, in turn, has consequences not only for the adults closest to the children, their parents, but also for all the adults who are co-users of that environment. Thus, for example, if the children in a particular residential area do not have appropriate play spaces, they fulfil their need to play in whatever spaces exist. Their parents may be very unhappy with these spaces, either because they are unsafe or because they are perceived as, for example, inappropriate or too far away. These opinions help determine the circumstances under which the children are allowed to play in these locations and, more generally, the degree of the parents' satisfaction with this residential environment. Further, it is likely that play in these inappropriate areas is a nuisance to other adults, in terms of noise and competing activities within the space.

Thus, it is a contention of this paper that in serving the interests of children we are also serving the interests of the adult population. However, this will only be true if we constantly keep in mind the interactions and interdependencies between the different population groups, and do not relate to the needs of one without consideration of the consequences for the others.

Strategically, the case for a greater focus upon children will be stronger and more acceptable if it includes illustrations of the positive consequences which this will have for adults, and of the points at which there are common needs and interests. For example, most paths of pedestrian

movement (particularly stairs) are designed for the average adult. They present problems not only to young children but also to handicapped persons, to the elderly, to adults with carriages or shopping carts, to bicycle riders, to people making deliveries and to others as well. Just as we cannot separate the physical from the social environment, we cannot relate to children's interests with total disregard for adult interests and vice versa; the interdependencies are too strong.

There are a number of caveats which must be explicitly stated before we proceed. Clearly, when we speak of children we are not speaking of a monolithic, homogeneous entity. Children's needs and interests are closely related to their ages, personalities, abilities, socioeconomic circumstances, and their social-cultural-physical environment. It may be difficult for us to constantly specify these interrelationships, but we must be cognizant of them.

Even the definition of who children are is not clear. The age cut-off point varies within countries for different purposes (legal or educational, for example), and between countries. The age factor is an important one because it is a convenient shorthand way of specifying different developmental stages. This paper will deal mainly with children up to about the age of 12, although some points will relate also to older groups. This is necessary in order to make the task more manageable, but is also justifiable in that the environmental implications are very different for under 12's and over 12's, and seem to be more important for the former.

In turn, we are faced with the issue of identifying children's interests. How do we know what they are, and who determines which are important? As an environmental psychologist, I take the position that we must answer these questions:

1. by observing children's behavior and speaking to them, thus learning directly from them how they relate to their world and what is important to them[1],
2. by asking their parents, teachers and other adults who affect or are affected by children's behavior,
3. and by consulting the professional literature dealing with their physical and psychological development.

The not-so-simple problem then becomes one of finding ways to translate this knowledge into design and planning criteria, and into actual practice.

The Israeli Context

Just as the term children is a very general one, the term urban environment applies to very different physical, social and cultural

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[1] In a later section of this paper, I will present the results of some studies in Israel which have done just this.

entities with very different implications for children's lives. One of the purposes of this paper is to attempt to identify the common factors related to children in urban neighborhoods which transcend political, social, cultural, economic and physical differences. In order to do this it is important to understand, at least somewhat, the particular context of children's lives in Israel; for it is within this context that the material to be presented here has been gathered.[2]

Eighty-six percent of the population of Israel (or 3,007,300 people) live in urban localities.[3] (An urban locality is defined as either a locality whose population numbers 10,000 or more, or one with a smaller population down to a minimum of 2,000 of whom less than half of the employed persons work in agriculture.) Thirty-one percent of the population are children up to the age of 13, of whom 83% live in urban localities.[4]

At least 75% of the urban population lives in multi-storey dwellings at medium or higher densities. In Israeli terms, a low gross building density is 2-3 dwelling units per dunam (or 8-12 per acre); medium gross building density is 4-7 units per dunam (16-28 per acre); and high density is 8-10 units per dunam (32-40 per acre). There is a 40% difference between gross and net density since the law allows for extraction of 40% without compensation to the developer. This land is used for local public services such as roads, utilities, schools, health facilities, parks and playgrounds.

The average number of persons per household in urban localities is 3.6. The average number of children to age 17 per household is 2.4.

The average number of rooms per apartment[5] built in the public sector has increased from 2.0 in 1955 to 3.2 in 1977, while in the private sector it has increased from 2.2 in 1955 to 3.6 in 1977. The average apartment size built in the public sector has increased from 45 m^2 in 1955 to 77 m^2 in 1977 and in the private sector from 75 m^2 to 112 m^2. The relative weight of the public and private sectors in housing fluctuates, but for many years it has been about equal.

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[2] My goal in this paper is to transmit information on research and practice in Israel, much of which is only available in Hebrew. Thus, I have purposely refrained from citing references to the work being done in other countries.

[3] The source for this and the other statistics presented is the Statistical Abstract of Israel 1978, published by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

[4] Since the majority of Israeli Arabs live in rural or small urban localities, this paper will deal basically with the Jewish population and the rest of the statistics will apply to it.

[5] In Israel, kitchens are not included in the count of the number of rooms in a dwelling unit.

It is clear that there has been a steady increase in the standard of housing available. However, this improvement has also contributed to the existing social gap, because different waves of immigration received different standards of housing according to what was common at the time of their arrival (Oxman, Meyer-Brodnitz & Amit, 1978).

Average housing density is 1.5 persons per room.[6] However, in 1977, 2.9% of all households had a density of over three persons per room (24,000 households), and another 4.6% of over two persons per room (38,000 households). Thus, it is apparent that a substantial number of children live in very crowded conditions. The government has committed itself to improving the housing conditions of all those in the 3+ category, but clearly the dimensions of the problem do not allow for a speedy resolution.

The warm, sunny climate, extending over 8-9 months of the year, allows children to spend many hours of the day out of doors. Children have a great deal of freedom of movement and mobility. Walking and bicycling are common means of getting from place to place, since distances are relatively short. Public transportation is extensive in the larger urban localities, and is relatively inexpensive, especially since children up to the age of 18 are allowed a 50% discount.

The Residential Environment

The focal point of children's lives is the home and its immediate surroundings, with the definition of "immediate" surroundings expanding with age. It is important to remember that the conditions within the dwelling and in the family have significant implications for what the child does outside of it. Children who live in overcrowded homes are likely to spend more time out of doors, and yet an examination of public services in Israeli development towns indicated that there is a negative correlation between housing density and parks and playgrounds. There are fewer parks and playgrounds in areas of high density, where they are presumably needed more (Hill & Alterman). For example, Rachel Sebba has asked 95 children, ranging in age from 6 to 16, why it is that our society feels it is so important for everyone to have a home. Seventy-two percent of the children and adults interviewed mentioned "control" as an important aspect of the meaning of home. However, whereas for their parents control was basically an active phenomenon relating to the ability to determine the physical character of the space, or to control the behavior of others within it, for a majority of the children "control" meant the ability to control their own behavior. Their expectations in this regard increased with age. The younger ones made statements like "you can say what you think", "you can ask for food if you're hungry". The older ones said "you can eat whenever you want", "you can turn the music up loud". If this minimal amount of control is part of what makes home special to them, we learn by implication that they have even less control over their behavior within other settings.

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[6] In Israel, kitchens are not included in the count of the number of rooms in a dwelling unit.

Second in importance for children below the age of 13 was the feeling of security attained within the home. Although the aspect of protection from outsiders was mentioned, the major message was that their familiarity with the physical environment of the home allowed them to feel comfortable and secure in their ability to function within it.

Another point the children made was that home was a good place in which to grow up because their parents were very concerned about their children's welfare; the children felt that adults in other settings, such as schools or community centres, are not interested in them. These answers deserve attention because they give us a glimpse into the world of these children, and, by implication, may offer us insights into aspects relevant to larger scale planning for young people.

For most aspects of children's lives, and particularly for younger children, the neighborhood is effectively their town or city. It is the area where they live, go to school, play, run errands, and carry on much of their activity. It is the outdoor area in which they feel most comfortable, because it is the most known, and because within it they have the most freedom of movement. However, even within the neighborhood, the area effectively used and related to is relatively circumscribed, and on a small scale.

Galia Weiser has addressed the question of children's images of their streets (Weiser, 1977). Children in grades 4 and 6 were interviewed; each participant was also asked to draw a picture of his or her street. She found that, although a child was aware of the official boundaries of the street he or she lived on, the child related to only a section of it as "my street". For 72% of the children (with only a slight difference between the ages), "my street" extended up to a maximum of 150 meters, and for many of them it was only 50 meters. There was some indication that environmental characteristics, such as spatial continuity without the disturbance of motor traffic, and the proximity of attractive centres of activity such as a large shopping centre, could contribute somewhat to the extension of this range to 300 meters.

"My street" was a place to be in, a place for playing games, for building and fixing things, for reading and so forth. By contrast, the small group of parents in the sample related to the street in terms of its objective boundaries, and as a corridor space connecting various points; a place to pass through on the way to somewhere else.

This study lends further weight to other studies of residential areas; all come to the same conclusion. Children play near their homes, and even though the range of what is considered nearby increases with age, it does not go much beyond a range of a few hundred meters. Children play close to home, regardless of whether there are physical elements intended for use for play, or whether it is safe to do so, or whether or not they bother other people.

In most of our urban localities, the physical area closest to home is the street. Historically, the street has been the principal playground for urban children. The biblical prophet Zechariah even describes

an ideal situation as one in which "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets" (Chapter 8, Verse 5). In a previous paper which surveyed much of the available literature, I expanded on the issue of children's street play (Churchman, 1976). It became apparent that children play in the street because it embodies certain characteristics desirable to them. These characteristics are:

1. The aforementioned proximity to home, whose advantages are that it is convenient, can be treated in some ways as a continuation of the home, imparts a feeling of security and belonging, and allows more spontaneous and temporary groupings. Parents also prefer this proximity because it allows them supervisory opportunities from within the home.

2. Interest - because it is a place of varied activity engaged in by various age groups, including adults. It is "where the action is". Children spend a good deal of their play time watching the activities of others. Clearly, it is more interesting to be in a place where there are exciting things to watch, and where one can keep tabs on the comings and goings of adults and children like delivery men, visitors and members of neighboring families.

3. An open space and paved surfacing which allow children to engage in the very popular activities of ball playing, bicycle riding, roller skating, hopscotch and the like.

4. An open character in terms of its being undefined and unspecified as meant for particular kinds of activities. This allows more scope for activities which stem solely from the ideas and desires of the children. Imagination and creativity can be exercised in finding use for objects in the street as props for games.

5. Easy and free access both physically and visually. Spontaneity is inhibited if a major effort is needed to reach a suitable and permissible place. With the street available, one does not have to plan ahead.

Clearly, some way must be found to make streets in the older urban areas able to safely accommodate children's play. No such attempts have as yet been made in Israel.

In areas where the roadway is much too dangerous, children are forced to make do with the sidewalks, and the area around the entrance to the building. In some instances the existence of a semi-open, entrance level to the building, representing an area that is near the street and has some of its characteristics, has taken the place of the street, particularly for younger children. It functions best for this purpose when there are no apartments on the same level, when there is sufficient usable space for active play, and when it is physically and visually open to the street area (Churchman & Ginsberg, 1979).

Street play obviously represents a safety hazard, and attempts to address this problem in newer urban areas have taken the form of housing developments with a separation of motor and pedestrian traffic. These,

however, are not an unmitigated success. One study of such a neighborhood (Slijper & Stup, 1977) found that at no time during the course of their observations in the area were children playing in the playgrounds provided. They were to be found in the parking lots, near the garbage cans, and on the pedestrian paths. This led to conflicts with adult users of the spaces, and to adult perceptions of the neighborhood as overcrowded.

The documented failure of traditional playgrounds in other countries to attract virtually any children over the age of 5 is supported time and again in studies in Israel (Amir & Alterman, 1979; Ginsberg & Churchman, 1978; Slijper & Stup, 1977; Weiser, 1977). The reasons for this failure include the lack of most of the attractive features of the street, and the inappropriateness of the physical scale and degree of challenge for older children. By providing static, defined equipment they limit the creative, imaginative scope of play. Even newer playgrounds using more natural materials and attempting to be more innovative and creative have on the whole failed to function as other than fun places to visit every few months. It is clear that the large sums of money spent on these playgrounds are wasted.

The importance of this question of outdoor play space lies in the central role that play occupies in the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of the child. Very briefly, play offers opportunities for physical exercise, sensory pleasure, testing and improving skills, emotional release, trying out autonomy and self-reliance, experimenting with adult roles through experience, social learning (learning to give as well as take), developing conversational and organizational skills, fantasy, creative expression, adventure and exploration.

Even from this abridged list it is apparent that play is an essential experience in childhood development. It is not a tangential aspect or a frill, but learning for life. Play affects the personality, character and ability of every child, and it must be accorded a place in planning commensurate with its importance as the fundamental activity of childhood. Obviously, play, like all activity, takes place in an environment. It must be recognized, however, that play is a self-chosen activity, and that the spaces in which it occurs will also be self-chosen ones.

As I have indicated previously, this issue has major ramifications for virtually all the users of the residential environment. Thus, the provision of environments suited for play must be given a higher place in the list of planning priorities than the place traditionally accorded play when it was regarded as "merely" recreation.

At present the approach in Israel is to build playgrounds, and to consider that this has satisfied the requirements for children's play. The location of many of these playgrounds strongly suggests that the English expression SLAP - space left after planning - may be applied. This has happened in spite of the weight of the evidence arguing against the advisability or utility of allocating particular and relatively large spaces for playgrounds, and investing large sums in static equipment.

In a recent publication written for a project on innovation and improvement in housing sponsored by the Israel Ministry of Housing, I have argued that it is necessary to adopt an integrated approach to the whole residential area (Churchman, 1978). We need to provide a variety of play opportunities, so that choice is available, and the needs of different children and different ages met. Success is possible because the reference is not to playgrounds but to play spaces, or spaces not assigned solely for play but adapted to accommodate it in addition to other activities. Children are the main users of outdoor areas; therefore, all parts of the residential area should be planned to fit the psychological and safety needs of children, and should be appropriate for children's play.

1. They should be safe from dangerous confrontations with motor traffic. This does not necessarily require total separation, but can be achieved by the design of a physical system which makes it very clear to the driver that the pedestrian has the right of way, and that a large percentage of these pedestrians are children who may not yet be capable of understanding or obeying traffic rules.

2. Any play equipment provided as well as any design elements, such as retaining walls or fences, which may be used as play equipment, should be safe.

3. The kinds of materials and surfaces used should be able to withstand the use and "misuse" which children's play may occasion. This applies also to other facilities, such as schools and community centres, where children abound. Surfaces should be of sufficient variety to satisfy the needs of different age groups: earth, sand and water for younger children; paved areas for ball playing, bicycles and skates; and grassy areas for relaxing or tumbling.

4. The scale of the physical elements and space should be appropriate relative to the size, abilities and vantage points of the children. Regulation-size basketball courts or soccer fields are not required for everyday play. A simple basket within a paved area of 15-20 m^2 will do very well.

5. Spaces should be available which offer protection from the elements - sun, wind and rain.

6. Disturbances to other residents should be prevented. Both the privacy of first floor dwellings and the desire for quiet within the apartments or in at least some parts of the outdoor area should be respected; as well, the other activities which also legitimately occur in these outdoor areas should not be negatively affected. We have seen that children prefer playing near general activity centres, and this should be facilitated in a way which does not interfere with their functioning.

7. Play areas should be appropriate in terms of the aspect of proximity to home stressed previously, and in terms of visual accessibility from within the dwelling, so that children ages 3-5 may play outside on their own.

This integrated approach to neighborhood planning deals with the issue on a micro-level, the level most relevant for children. However, it is problematic in terms of the application within the context of macro-scale planning. How can one specify how many square meters or dunam should be allocated for play? We faced the problem recently in an attempt to apply a new, more flexible system of developing land standards to the question of open space needs (Hill & Alterman, 1977). When addressing the question of play spaces we were concerned that, if we recommend this approach and rejected the idea of playgrounds altogether, the practical result might be a considerable lessening of open space in the area, and virtually no compensation to the children in the form of additional small scale spaces.

The solution arrived at represented a compromise between the desired and the practical. A distinction was made between the requirements for the 0-5 and 6-12 age groups. For the younger group, it was recommended that small-scale areas be scattered throughout the area, in such a way as to allow eye-voice contact from the dwellings and at a 50-meter walking distance radius. A size of between 200-500 m^2 was considered large enough to appear as a specific space allocation, but small enough to allow the scattering of a number of such spaces. In addition, guidelines were suggested as to the quality of these spaces, and as to legal possibilities for ensuring their maintenance by the authorities.

The recommendations for the other age group were based on the assumption that older children are more mobile, and would have a greater choice of play spaces, thus allowing for a more concentrated space meant for a larger potential population. The size of the space was set at between 1 and 2 dunam, which would be large enough to accommodate some informal sports, to be located within a radius of 200-400 meters.

Another aspect which complicates the implementation of a different approach is that it is apparent that not all parents are aware that playgrounds are not the ideal solution for children's play. When they demand playgrounds as visible proof that their children's needs are being met, they strengthen the hand of the official policy - thus making change more difficult. The point is that one must not only address a problem, one must also be perceived to be addressing that problem. It must be visible and obvious to the adults that thought has been given to their children, and not only thought but also tangible results. An educational campaign may be necessary to convince them. This might take the form of involving them in the planning process, so as to give them the opportunity of researching the question, and observing the facts. The children will need no convincing; they will be busy playing.

A few words are in order on the controversial subject of children and high rise housing. The experience in some countries has been very negative in this regard, but it is not yet clear whether the problem is inherent to high rise buildings, or is a function of the interaction with other factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural attitudes, size, and specific design features.

We have embarked upon a series of research projects designed to study this issue within the Israeli context. The first project found that women living in 8-storey buildings of two sorts did not perceive this building type as clearly negative for children. Most of them felt that a large building offers the advantage of many children from whom to choose friends, and that there is no difference between the way children are raised in high or low buildings.

On the other hand, 31% of the sample of 150 felt that there was a negative difference in that children in high rise buildings have less independence. Seventy-seven percent of them allow their children to play outside alone, but most of them do not allow them to use elevators by themselves. (Legally, children under 14 are not allowed to use elevators alone, but adherence is not customary.) In other words, there is a degree of inconvenience associated with building height, with children having to use the stairs, or someone having to escort them (Ginsberg & Churchman, 1978; Churchman & Ginsberg, 1979).

For the next project, we are presently interviewing residents of 13 and 20-storey buildings with control groups in 8 and 4-storey buildings. First returns based on 185 interviews indicate that, at ages 4 and 5, about 50% of the children are allowed to play outside alone; there is a clear cut-off point so that from age 6 all are so allowed. However, it is interesting to note that, despite this situation, many mothers felt that children in high rise buildings have less freedom and independence than children in lower buildings.

The very tentative conclusion at this point would be that, within the Israeli context, and for the basically middle-class population studied, high rise buildings are not perfect solutions for children, yet they are not perfectly awful.

Neighborhood Planning Criteria: Some Recommendations

On the whole, I would argue that the major issue is not so much the allocation of special areas or special programmes for children, but rather their integration into the general life of the city or town. What then is needed in order to allow children to participate as much as they care to?

One requirement is a safe environment in the sense of the relative absence of, or ability to avoid, dangerous confrontations with traffic, adults, or older children. In Israel, traffic is our major problem. The street system in the older urban areas is not able to cope with the rapid increase in private cars (from 80,500 in 1965 to 308,000 in 1977). Drivers and pedestrians are, by and large, far too careless and reckless, and the accident rate is very high. In 1977 there were accidents involving casualties at the rate of 436 per 100,000 population, with children up to age 14 representing 16% of those casualties (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1978).

As in other countries, all aspects of the roads, such as signs and angles, are geared to adult dimensions and capabilities. There is no

consideration given to the physical, cognitive and psychological limitations of children, which affect their ability to learn and follow safety rules, and to control their behavior. Within the schools there is a programme to teach safety rules, and children serve as crossing guards before and after school; but there is a limit to what can be expected of them at various developmental stages. Concern for their safety should be reflected in attention to the siting of schools, not only in terms of distance from the home (the present maximum for the early grades is 2-3 kilometers), but also in terms of the streets it will be necessary to cross.

Transportation planning is at present geared solely for the convenience of the motorist. The fact that people and pedestrian traffic are crucial to the life of the city, and that their needs must be considered over and above the needs of traffic flow, has not yet been generally accepted. Pedestrian streets are only now being gingerly tried in the larger cities, although pedestrianized shopping centres are common in the smaller development towns.

A second requirement of urban environment for children is that of accessibility. This has two aspects. The first is a public transportation system which allows children the possibility of reaching points of interest on their own, without being taken by adults; or which allows adults without cars to reach them with their children. In Israel's larger cities, these systems are available, and distances are such that it is possible, for example, for older children to travel on their own from Haifa to Tel Aviv for a day's outing. Second, a price structure at the various points of interest should make it possible for children with little means to participate. The situation in Israel is variable in this regard.

A third requirement is that of visibility, in the sense of public awareness that the programmes and facilities exist. This often requires an outreach programme, particularly in order to make contact with population groups not ordinarily aware of non-local services.

Tolerance is also required. Children's behavior is qualitatively different from that of adults. It is often noisy and boisterous in an essentially innocuous fashion. Unless this is understood, and accepted as such, it may lead to declaring various facilities out of bounds to children.

For example, one of the municipal libraries in Haifa found itself being inundated with children from the surrounding area noisily doing their homework. The first response of the librarians was to ask the children to leave because of the noise, and the fact that the library was not meant for homework. However, when they discovered that these children came from crowded homes, where there was no place to do homework, they allowed the children to remain and even began assisting them.

This is not meant to imply that tolerance requires permissiveness. Children must learn that there is a mutuality of interests, that their rights are predicated upon the respect of the rights of others. The urban environment can, however, do more to accommodate itself to their needs.

In conclusion, I would like to list some of the additional issues and questions for which we do not as yet have informed answers or for which the answers are still being debated:

1. Is the physical separation of pedestrian and motor traffic advisable?

2. How can overcrowding in the dwelling be measured? What are its implications for children's development, and at what levels are these critical?

3. Can community services and facilities compensate for this overcrowding, or, more generally, for small apartments?

4. Can community facilities be multi-purpose and fulfil all functions adequately? For example, can schools also serve as community centres?

5. Should new areas be based upon single-use or mixed-use zoning?

6. Should planned neighborhoods be homogeneous or heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic or life cycle criteria?

7. Can the location of community centres or schools on the boundary between two neighborhoods achieve integration?

Society pays lip service to the importance of children and to the central place which they have within it. However, actions often speak louder than words, and the message communicated by the designed and managed physical environment does not reflect this centrality. The way to any specific solution lies in an informed consideration of the needs and characteristics of the children, and a commitment to actualize the implications of these in design and planning.

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PLANNING RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR REAL USE BY CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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I. PLANNING FOR PLAY AND OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT OF THE HOME

a) Introduction

To offset the extreme functionalism of much town planning, a more integrated approach to housing and recreation is now being developed in the Netherlands. The entire gamut of recreational facilities is being integrated into plans for new residential districts.

Though there is as yet no solid legal basis for recreational amenities, the community generally recognizes the need for them, and their importance. They are often referred to as social and cultural facilities, which covers the entire range from a simple bench at the street corner and a sand pit to an extensive community centre.

One basic condition for a human environment is regulation of the flow of traffic so that pedestrian areas and traffic areas can exist side by side. This greatly improves the general quality of residential districts, as the residents can again take possession of the streets they had lost to traffic. The original functions of the street as an extension of the home, a place to meet others and to relax, are in this way restored. The official introduction of the "woonerf" as a legal and town planning concept has contributed much to these improvements. This concept will be discussed in greater detail below.

b) Criteria for "Humanized" Residential Areas With Respect to Children and Youth

In the summer of 1974, the Stichting Ruimte published a report entitled Youth and the Residential Environment: Criteria for "Humanized" Residential Areas, which lists the demands made on the residential environment by the various age categories up to 25 years, based on an extensive study of the literature of the social sciences, psychology and education. Table 1 presents a translation of the summarizing scheme describing the characteristics of the various age groups. The major points are as follows:

1. Play and recreational facilities must constitute an integral part of the surroundings of the home. Children must be able to play in

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS FROM BIRTH TO ADULTHOOD WITH REGARD TO REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAIN HUMAN LIVING ENVIRONMENT

BABIES (0 to about 1 year)	TODDLERS (about 1 to 3 years)
1. Dependence on orientation towards attachment to the mother (figure)	1. Increasing interest in the immediate environment: mother (figure) initially still central
2. Experience of one's own body and its functions	2. Increasing contact with members of the family, rapid psychological growth
3. Development of elementary senses: hearing, sight and touch	3. Elementary language development
4. Limited selection of stimuli from the environment	4. Start of socialization: a) toilet-training b) restriction of aggression and destruction c) free expression and giving direction to it
5. Increasing control over one's own body (sensory-motor development) a) First: lying in a place determined by the adult b) From about 7 months: crawling c) From about 1 year: walking	5. Increasing control of one's own body and situation
	6. Continuation of motor development; most children walk at 15 months
	7. Development and expansion of sensory experience
	8. More selective perceptive ability: a) recognition and interpretation of forms and objects b) increasing ability to distinguish visual and tactile qualities
	9. Seeing and hailing range is growing to about 100 meters from mother
	10. Desire to experiment
	11. Need for reassuring guidance

TABLE 1 (continued)

TODDLERS (about 1 to 3 years)	PRESCHOOLERS (about 3 to 6 years)
12. Play: a) in the company of, but not with other children b) function and movement play c) fantasy play (with objects) d) role play	1. Children of the same age become important 2. Socialization process on larger scale (nursery school) 3. Choice of comrades 4. Increasing control of language 5. More complex personality as a result of imitation and identification 6. Greater interest and curiosity about new things 7. Rapid development of perceptive ability 8. Rapid motor development 9. High-rise flats usually still a barrier 10. Increasing independence; greater initiative in all kinds of situations, playing alone or with others 11. Eager to learn and sensitive to education 12. Play: a) range still about 100 meters from home b) movement play: running, climbing, cycling, digging c) fantasy play, role play d) construction play: making new things e) expressive play: preference for unformed material such as sand, water, clay, plasticine, pencils and chalk

TABLE 1 (continued)

YOUNG SCHOOL CHILDREN (about 6 to 10 years)	OLDER SCHOOL CHILDREN (about 10 to 13 years)
1. Mother less central	1. Usually, continuation and reinforcement of the previous elements
2. Children of same age very important: group play	2. Sense of power and competing with children of their own age in fighting and contests (sport)
3. Primary school is second orientation framework with important role in growing up and learning social skills	3. Independence in traffic from the age of 9
4. Growing awareness of sex	4. In general, expansion of socio-geographical environment: general range much larger, play range usually still 300 meters from home
5. Rather rigid senses of honesty and justice	5. Sex distinction increases
6. Continued process of growing independence: more independent choice of friends, clubs	a) boys play outdoors more than girls, game is rougher and usually farther from home
7. More interest in animals than in plants	b) greater sex separation in play and other activities
8. Play:	6. Play:
a) range about 300 meters more for special purposes such as school, playground, swimming pool	a) fantasy
b) sand, water, clay and the like still preferred	b) construction play
c) construction play	c) group play
d) expressive play	d) movement play
e) movement play: running, climbing, jumping, roller skating and ball playing	e) games
f) sports, such as swimming	7. Participation in youth and group work

TABLE 1 (continued)

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS (about 13 to 15 years)	OLDER ADOLESCENTS (older than 15 years)
1. Transition from childhood to adulthood: greater physical and mental change a) more rapid growth in length, other bodily proportions, less childlike appearance b) sexual maturation c) generally greater independence d) abstract thinking: identity questions, rebelliousness, idealism, insecurity, indecision	1. Need for so-called "third environment" in addition to home and school or work, characterized by the so-called "youth culture"; specific group life with norms and values and characteristic outward behavior
2. Play: a) includes making and listening to music, dance, hobbies, games b) involves constant choice, more serious activities	2. Rapprochement of the sexes; joint activities
3. Range unlimited	3. Adolescents occupy a special place in society and often have a special sensitivity to problems of both youth and adults
4. Formation of informal street or neighborhood groups	4. Social differences in the two worlds of experience (work and study) become clearer a) employed youth: more independent in practical terms b) students: more independent in intellectual terms
5. Participation in youth and group work	5. Sports
	6. More serious activities: see young adolescents

all parts of their residential environment, though of course some places will be more suitable than others and this distinction will remain;

2. It is important to give thought to all parts of the residential environment with a view to their use by young people and their elders, and to their principal and subsidiary functions in all seasons, day and night, now and in the future;

3. A residential environment (neighborhood, district) should be regarded as a complete unit, and constantly changing.

The report offers two quantitative norms for the planning and designing of facilities for children under the neighborhood level:

a) Children under six years of age usually play close to their homes, within a radius of 100 meters. As they grow older their action radius gradually increases.

b) The distance for children up to approximately 12 years of age is 300 to 400 meters from their homes.

The report also stresses a set of requirements or, as we prefer to call them, "guiding values", to be met in planning or assessing residential areas. An explanation of these requirements follows.

1. Safety

For a safe residential area, traffic must be subject to special provisions making it subservient to pedestrians and cyclists. A network of paths and tracks for pedestrians and cyclists constitutes the main means of communication between houses and between the latter and schools, and recreational and other facilities.

a) Road Safety

The playground is only an emergency solution, a well-intentioned answer to a situation which is essentially wrong. It signifies a form of impoverishment because children should feel safe to go exploring throughout the whole environment in which they live. They need parks, gardens (and the like), where they are allowed to go where they enjoy going - places which lend themselves to play. They also need a safe route to and from school that provides inviting and challenging opportunities for play along the way.

b) Water Safety

Special attention should be paid to water. Banks must not be too steep, for a child who falls in must be able to get out again. A shallow part at the edge makes this possible. A bank which is full of variety, with small bays, spots which run dry, reeds and mud, is inviting without the danger of fatal accidents. Any buildings should be at some distance from the water's edge. Safe play areas, where the water flows slowly and is not more than about 20 cm deep, should be located where people out walking will happen to pass by or where they may take a rest on a bench. These safe areas should be clearly recognizable. In any case, small children should not be allowed to play near water unless someone is keeping an eye on them, and really dangerous water should be made inaccessible, for example, by planting a strong impenetrable hedge.

2. Congeniality

In a climate like ours, shelter is very important. We have a lot of wind and frequent rain. High-rise flats cause gusts of wind and newly-built areas often contain bare and draughty squares and open spaces where it is unpleasant to remain for long.

Shelter from the weather increases the choice of activities: if it rains, blows or is too cold, children must be able to play indoors. This option is of particular importance in areas with high-rise residences.

Intimacy is essential for small children. Because of their limited capacity to tolerate and adjust to situations, they need orientation points close to home. Children under 6 years of age need to be able to play within 100 meters of their homes, that is, within calling distance; and they require small-scale facilities, such as small sand pits, shallow ponds, low walls, and little variation in height.

Like shelter, this has to do with feeling protected, but in an emotional rather than a physical sense. It means feeling at home and secure in familiar surroundings. It means having the right place to sit or to lie in, to be alone or to meet other people, to settle down for a chat.

The area closest to home is important for everybody - it is really a part of the home. This is where the youngest children play. It must, therefore, be laid out with utmost care.

Because high-rise flats tend to lack intimacy, particular attention must be given to the entrance and immediate surroundings. From the child's perspective, seeing everything from below, steps can be insurmountable obstacles, the curb a seat, and cars, monsters.

3. Tolerance

Town planning and architectural design must make full allowance for the activities of children and adults. A residential environment must encourage children's games; prohibitions must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Tolerance means giving a child the chance to be a child - to make a play world within the real world. It means not drawing too sharp a line between these two worlds, and considering in advance how a child is going to react to the area where he or she will live.

Specific techniques can include:

a) Make barbed wire unnecessary.
b) Do not have delicate plants.
c) Sow plants to cover any bare soil.
d) Cut off the corners of flower beds, making them part of the path, or plant sizeable shrubs in corners.
e) Make logical lanes and bypaths and indicate clearly where they are.

4. Accessibility

A child who cannot play is deprived, while one who is always taken by the hand does not grow up to be independent. Therefore, toddlers and young children should be allowed to go outside by themselves, play by themselves, and come inside again by themselves. This is only possible when there is a direct and easy connection between the home and the outdoors, as well as between the outdoors and the school or clubhouse.

In high-rise flats there are too many obstacles to outdoor play. Small children cannot use lifts and stairs unaided. Galleries, stairways and

entrance hall areas are often very draughty, which makes children inclined to stay indoors; nor are they allowed to play there because of the noise. Thus the whole area between inside and outside is lost for the purpose of play.

A direct relation between indoors and outdoors is important in that it facilitates the child's use of the home as a base, indicating that high-rise flats are not to be recommended for small children unless they are equipped with easily worked lifts, bells, and entry telephones. Buildings no higher than three stories provide the possibilities for spontaneous play which are important for children's development.

5. Variation and Liveliness

Variation in design, layout, and use of materials makes a residential environment more surprising and fascinating, more a challenge, often an adventure, and also more identifiable.

Differences in elevation attract children: they climb up, slide down, hide, jump, or sit protected with their backs to a slope. They can make discoveries and measure themselves against their surroundings. Differences in elevation are accompanied by differences in moisture and temperature, which means a more varied vegetation can develop. In rainy weather little streams form, and lower-lying parts become temporary pools. In winter, sleds can be used on the snow-covered slopes.

Perhaps equally important, different functions and activities should take place in the area. Multipurpose use of a site is, in fact, a characteristic of a lively street. It can be achieved by integrative planning of dwellings, workshops, stores, offices and recreational and other facilities.

6. Relations and Routes

Look at a plan or area the way an actual user would; give particular attention to the perspective of the pedestrian and check, for example, the mentioned criteria. Are the connections between the various services and facilities direct and short enough? Do they cross motor routes safely? Is there enough shelter? Are they lively and attractively varied?

7. Play Facilities

Are they integrated into the plan or area as real meeting places? Have the above criteria been met in designing each play area? As there must be small-scale intimate spots, there must be open space in every play facility partly related to the small-scale site and partly separated from it. Different ages need each other's vicinity from time to time, but can also disturb each other.

8. Involvement

For facilities to function well, either the official local bodies who are responsible for maintenance or the residents themselves, possibly supported by those professional bodies, must be involved.

Of course, a list of standards such as this can never be complete, for environmental quality can never be fully described.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTRUMENT OF ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS: THE ROERMOND RESEARCH PROJECT

At Roermond, we are dealing with one of the most important ways in which the residential environment can be used: play and recreation. In accordance with the guidelines outlined above, three important new ways of thinking about this aspect of the residential environment can be distinguished:

1. Children and other residents are entitled to use their entire residential environment, rather than just specially provided facilities within that environment, for play and recreation.

2. Although the statistical approach has an important role, quality is more important than quantity.

3. The design and location of play facilities should be integrated into town planning as a whole.

An increasing number of municipalities are adopting these new ways of thinking, often simply on the basis of intuition. When it comes to applying them to the formulation of specific measures, however, problems can arise. The municipality of Roermond, faced with an extremely large number of neighborhoods and streets in need of renewal, consulted the Stichting Ruimte for advice in the spring of 1976. Decisions were needed on the locations and kinds of improvements to be made. The municipality asked the Stichting Ruimte to attempt to translate the ideas about the residential environment set out in its report, discussed in the first section of this paper, into practical terms. It was proposed that the new policy be relatively forward-looking, and in accord with the three criteria referred to above. This invitation was accepted by the Stichting, which then proposed the following three-stage programme:

1. Analysis of existing neighborhoods in relation to the guidelines for a humane residential environment developed in the report;

2. Examination of the possibility of converting them into traffic-limited residential areas;

3. Provision of formal play facilities.

In cooperation with a group of local government officials, and through discussions with the various groups concerned within the municipality, a research project was carried out. Initially, attention was primarily devoted to the first of these three steps.

a) Structure of the Research

The evaluation of all of the residential environments was primarily based on systematic observation on the basis of the set of requirements mentioned above. The observations focused on the environment as it affected the research worker and included everything that occurred or did not occur during one, two or three visits to the area. This method lays particular emphasis on the physical and spatial qualities of the environment, and is based on the assumption that there are certain definite links between the particular physical characteristics of an environment and the qualities which make it an attractive area in which to live.

The physical characteristics were arranged in a systematically graded order for the purpose of this project and labelled "criteria" (the resulting list was not always exhaustive). The systematic observation of the residential environment then consisted of an analysis of its physical characteristics in the light of these criteria, which at the same time provided a description. As a result, certain key problems became apparent, as did suggestions for possible improvements. Most of the data consisted of verbal descriptions, although explanatory drawings were included occasionally. In the interests of objectivity, all of the evaluations were written out as fully as possible. This approach enabled the people most involved (the residents themselves) to know how they were compiled.

An important consideration in this kind of research project is that it must be possible to discuss all the different elements with all the parties concerned. The evaluations are by no means final; they are, rather, initial assessments, or part of a whole series of comparable evaluations which can set a number of processes in motion, both in the neighborhoods and in the town halls, and thus lead in due course to definitive action.

At all stages of the project a need was felt for information supplementary to that which could be verified first-hand. Discussions were held with a number of experts and local government representatives. Moreover, chance contacts threw light on various areas, routes, relationships and the locations of particular facilities. The prime emphasis of the project, however, was on evaluating the environment, using the eight guidelines and devoting particular attention to physical aspects. The research instrument we developed, called "Assessment Scheme for Playing in Residential Environments", elaborates on each of the eight guidelines so that specific, detailed information can be accumulated about a given area with respect to each. A section of it is reproduced in Table 2.

b) Utility of the Method

The method used was based on quality and had little if anything to do with statistical standards. It consisted of scrutinizing the living environment against the background of the eight criteria listed above. This meant that the scrutiny had to be thorough, based on experience, and capable of providing reliable results. In research of this kind, the client and the research workers must share a number of basic premises if the results are to

TABLE 2

RELATIONSHIPS

1. Footpaths, bicycle paths

   a) enforced diversions as a result of design of parks, gardens and paths

   b) options: protected/open
      separate/combined with traffic

2. Location of playgrounds, opportunities for sitting in relation to pedestrian routes

   a) clear-cut relationships (yes/no)

   b) mutual relationships (yes/no)

   c) quality as meeting point (young and old)

3. Through traffic routes; location of facilities in the living areas - shops, schools, medical centres, social institutions, community centres, etc.

   a) concentrated/scattered (neighborhood, area)

   b) safe and easy to reach (yes/no)
      barriers like busy roads

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be at all significant. This approach contrasts with one that accumulates data based on quantity, such as the number of square meters of particular amenities in relation to statistical norms.

In Roermond, the municipality and the Stichting Ruimte shared the views on which the qualitative method was based, and the subsequent report was adopted by the municipal authorities. It contains a detailed account of each of the various residential environments by the young people who live there, which provided a general picture of the situation and, in particular, of the shortcomings and changes required. Moreover, since the residents of the areas concerned were given the opportunity to express their views, it is suitable for use as the basis of a programme of priorities for action. A number of vital questions were raised:

1. Can the method of investigation chosen, which requires experience and must be reliable, be entrusted to a number of observers without the sheer size of the target area (such as a whole municipality) presenting them with insurmountable problems?

2. Is every type of residential environment suitable for evaluation by this means? Experience has shown, for instance, that problems arise when it is utilized for any area of large detached houses in which the public open space consists primarily of roads. No useful results can be expected from the application of this method, as the principles underlying this particular kind of land use are diametrically opposed to those in our evaluation.

3. To what extent is it wise to base the evaluation primarily on physical factors? Would it be advisable to add aspects connected with use and experience?

4. Would it be desirable for the outside researchers to work in cooperation with somebody local, both in principle and for practical reasons? An ongoing relationship of this kind would enable the investigation to be based on inside knowledge of the local situation.

5. Are we in a position to make our criteria more objective? One of the biggest questions is whether, in research of this kind, data can be fully expressed in words.

The development of this qualitative approach, and the increasing demand for it, may be regarded as a positive change in thinking about the residential environment. In time, it may be possible to learn and understand so much more as a matter of course that many of our present difficulties will simply evaporate.

III. THE "WOONERF"[1]

A process of radical reassessing of the residential environment may be said to have started in the Netherlands in the 1960's, but it is only now, in the 1970's, that it has attracted the attention of the policy-makers. The first body to take specific measures to give back to the street its original function was the municipality of Delft in 1971.

For too long, priorities have emphasized the smooth circulation of motor traffic. Space which is needed for walking, sitting, watching, playing and meeting friends is occupied by vehicles; noise and air pollution increase, and children's safety is threatened. The idea of the "woonerf" - a street or network of streets in which pedestrians have priority over traffic - was given legal substance by the Minister of Transport and Public Works in September 1976. It is an important step in the direction of preserving the quality of the residential environment.

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[1] See also "Woonerf: Residential Precinct", Royal Dutch Touring Club, Ekistics, V. 45, #273, Nov./Dec. 1978, "People-Oriented Urban Streets", pp. 417-423.

It has become clear that urban planning can have a great influence in reducing the number of conflicts between pedestrians and wheeled traffic.[1] Research (Kraay, 1974; SWOV, 1976) has shown that measures aimed at influencing social behavior, including regulations, technical measures such as zebra crossings, children's road safety training, and publicity campaigns, do not have the desired effect on road safety. According to the SCAFT Group in Sweden (SCAFT, 1968), pedestrian "errors" are of secondary importance in studying pedestrian safety. The main reason for dangers to pedestrians is the traffic environment, which creates situations with a given risk of "errors". The environment should be such that a pedestrian's "error" does not promptly lead to a conflict or an accident.

The most obvious solution is the physical segregation of traffic categories, that is, designing the environment so that pedestrian-motorist conflicts are all but impossible. No law enforcement is needed; it is a clear, comprehensible system conditioned by its design.

Another application of this principle is the construction of pedestrian and bicycle route systems. In most cases these routes may parallel roads for motor vehicles, but where roads with high traffic densities have to be crossed, special provisions are made. Analysis of a designed pedestrian and bicycle route system for Delft (population 100,000) shows that the costs of such a system are about 10% of the normal costs of provisions for the motorcar.

These pedestrian and bicycle routes play an important role with respect to safe and attractive ways from home to school. Physical segregation of traffic categories, however, imposes too many limitations on the numerous kinds of activities and contacts for which the direct residential area is normally used. This gives rise to a new approach to road safety in residential areas, based on the integration of traffic categories.

One sort of integration is provided by the woonerf. In a woonerf, public areas serve primarily as places for walking and playing; only local traffic is permitted in them. In contrast to incidental alterations, such as adding thresholds and narrowing driveways, creating a woonerf requires a systems approach in which the entire area is designed or redesigned.

The function of a woonerf differs particularly from that of a traditional street in that the same paved area can be, and is, used for activities such as driving, playing, cycling, walking and parking.

The woonerf is by no means the only way of "humanizing" a street; a less radical approach may be desirable, especially if the street plays nor important role for through traffic.

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[1] This section is based on the introduction of the report entitled "Development of a Conflict Observation Technique" by V.A. Güttinger and J.H. Kraay, The Netherlands, 1976.

If the traffic density is very high (more than about 150 vehicle units per peak hour) and if there is excessive parking as compared with building density, woonerven will not provide the answer. For such localities, other solutions must be found.

In any event, care must be taken against adopting a stereotyped approach to streets and squares simply because legislation lays down certain minimum demands and conditions which a woonerf must fulfil. It is vital that the aim of all these efforts and, therefore, the reason for specific measures, remain clear. Every new street and neighborhood has its own special characteristics which provide the basis for developing new ways of making it more safe and congenial. The resultant variety will ensure that each individual area will acquire its own separate identity, and will enhance the entire urban environment.

IV. SOME RESEARCH PROJECTS ON THE EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVE URBAN DESIGNS ESPECIALLY PERTAINING TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS[1]

a) Use Made of the Living Environment

In the first part of 1974, a research project was completed with the publication of the report, "The Use Value of the Living Environment, A Comparative Study of Two Newly-built Residential Areas in Delft" by V.A. Güttinger. This report contains the results of an evaluation of an experiment in designing the living environment. The purpose of the experiment was to create a setting that would be used more completely by children, who are the principal users of the living environment. The new design was also intended to facilitate and even stimulate more varied use of the setting. By observing children's behavior in the experimental district and in the more conventionally designed area, the investigation has ascertained to what extent the urban designers of the municipality of Delft were successful.

The results show that the ideas have been realized at least in part: in the conventionally-designed area, children concentrate in certain sectors such as pavements, green areas and playgrounds. In the experimental district, all age groups use other places for play as well. In the experimental area, children use the places they choose to play in more dynamically; interchange between places is more rapid, indicating their better integration and facilitating transition from one to another. In the more conventional district, children, especially those under 4 years of age, are more often accompanied by adults. In other words, it is likely that adults in the experimental district consider their environment safe enough for their children to play on their own.

The new design did not succeed insofar as a more varied pattern of activities is concerned: no difference was found in this respect between the two areas. Certain ages and certain activities seem to go together so much that design does not influence activity pattern: the same age groups in both districts engage in very similar activities.

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[1] My discussion of these four research projects closely follows the reports of the researchers themselves.

Particular places studied with a specific observation method show that design can generate a more varied pattern of activities. The use of space around the entrances and exits of flats shows especially that the concept behind the experimental district has been successfully translated into the design of the living environment. The results justify the conclusion that in the micro-planning of these sectors, a successful integration has taken place and as a result, a more complete and multi-functional use is possible. Although the design modifications are relatively modest, the addition of even the smaller creative alterations has given rise to a different net result, compared to earlier, more mono-functional designs.

The results clearly show that the new design of the outdoor living environment, compared with the conventional concept, does work out differently in the ways that it is used. Multi-functionality has been increased, more efficient use is possible, and it has more appeal for youngsters as well. It should be realized, however, that this is only a first step. This step looks promising, but much experimentation will be necessary.

1. Research Methods

The research was carried out by different kinds of observations. The observers noted down the children's behavior using a code for the various categories of activities. These activities are listed in Table 3, which compares their distribution in the experimental area with the conventional area.

2. Discussion

In spite of reliability checks on the observations, I think that there is much information and meaning lost in the interpretive moment between observing and categorizing behavior. In my opinion, the categories are too abstract to convey the feeling of the behavior as they should. Important differences in reality are not being measured, which make those patterns which are recorded less meaningful.

b) Traffic Safety in the Residential Environment

In 1976, the second stage of Güttinger's study, "Aspects of Traffic Safety in Two Residential Districts in Delft" was concluded with the report, "Children's Safety in Residential Areas; Part 2: Application of a Conflict Observation Method in a Field Study".

The first part of this study was concerned with the development of a reliable instrument for the prediction of children's traffic accidents. The so-called conflict observation technique (in which a serious conflict between child and participant in traffic is used as substitute for the real accident as a criterion for traffic safety) was applied in a field study in Delft. The purpose of the study was twofold:

1. To evaluate the usefulness of this new instrument for judging traffic safety;
2. To get insight into aspects of traffic safety of an experiment in town planning in Delft.

TABLE 3

ACTIVITIES	CONTROL AREA	EXPERIMENTAL AREA
Rest or repose	7.1%	17.8%
Ball games	0.0%	0.0%
Active play with materials to be found on the scene	7.1%	5.0%
Active play with other materials	23.5%	39.6%
Active play without materials	3.1%	2.0%
Passing through the area	55.1%	27.7%
Games with natural materials to be found on the scene	2.0%	5.0%
Activities with plants and animals	1.0%	0.0%
Imitative games	0.0%	0.0%
Improper behavior	1.0%	1.0%
Changing or interrupted activities	0.0%	2.0%
TOTAL:	99.9%	100.1%

The Delft experiment is directed at extending the possibilities of children's use of public space surrounding their homes by integrating sectors of the living environment (including roads, pavements, greenbelts, playgrounds, entrances to flats) which are usually separated in conventional districts. The different categories of users - children, adults, pedestrians, traffic - have, as a consequence of this approach, been integrated as well. The design, however, attempts to subordinate traffic to the other uses. The underlying concept is that encounters between children and traffic should be possible, although these should never lead to conflicts.

The result of both methods used in the study (person observation and sector observation) are fairly consistent. Compared with a more conventional design, considerably more encounters between children and traffic occur in the experimental district, which could have been expected from the integration of both categories. More important, however, is that more serious conflicts occur between these in the experimental district.

Both direct and indirect consequences of the design were observed:

1. An indirect effect of the design is the difference in the degree of guidance in traffic given to children by adults. In the seemingly less safe control district (where design facilitates traffic) children are more often accompanied by adults.

2. A direct influence on the results comes from the reciprocal perception people and traffic have of each other. The degree to which a clear view does or does not exist influences the number of encounters, their seriousness, and the effectiveness of the guidance. The view in an area can be such that even an adult cannot prevent serious conflicts.

To put it differently, in the seemingly unsafe (high traffic density) but open control district, few serious conflicts occur between children and traffic because of reciprocal perceptibility. The relatively intensive guidance by adults has an extra favorable effect. In the seemingly safe (low traffic density) experimental district, where the traffic situation can not be seen very clearly, more serious conflicts between children and traffic occur. Here, adult guidance has little effect.

The conflict observation method proved to be useful in establishing the locations and situations in which encounters and serious conflicts occur and in confirming the hypothesis that it is the nature of reciprocal perceptibility that is responsible for the occurrence of serious conflicts. With this method a good impression can be obtained, in a relatively short time, of the interactions of the different categories in a residential area. In view of the promising result of the study of the conflict method with respect to both reliability and applicability, a follow-up investigation will be conducted. This study (to be carried out in cooperation with the Institute for Road Traffic Safety Research) will focus primarily on the validity of serious conflicts as predictors for accidents. Observations will be conducted on parts of roads which are known sites of accidents involving children.

c) Urban Design Demonstration Projects

The government decided, in the interest of the good development of the new woonerven, to start two so-called "Demonstration Projects" on redesigning urban areas. In the municipalities of Rijswijk and Eindhoven, research institutes are in the process of evaluating:

1. Circulation
2. Safety
3. Physical Milieu
4. Socioeconomic effects
5. Use of public space
   a) who uses it
   b) how it is used

The objective of the project is to develop a variety of possibilities for rearranging urban space in gathering places and traffic zones. Three options are available:

1. by only simple means, change the existing situation to distinguish gathering places from traffic zones;

2. through moderate rearrangement measures, restrict the worst characteristics of current traffic;

3. turn the total area into a real woonerf.

The results have not yet been officially released. Because of my participation in one of the research groups, The Institute for Applied Sociology in Nijmegen, I have already learned of some informally. They include:

1. In both municipalities, children between the ages of 8 and 15 feel they are safer when playing in the streets than adults think they are.

2. These children say they are hardly troubled by bicycles or mopeds, but are bothered far more by motor vehicles and parked cars.

3. About 50% of the children report that there is insufficient free open space to play in their own streets. A somewhat smaller number of children say that for their entire neighborhoods. On this subject, too, the adults consider the situation worse than the children do.

d) Children in Their Residential Environment

Joost van Andel, a psychologist at the University of Leiden, and I collaborated on a research project in 1978, investigating the influence of the residential environment on children's play.

We adapted the method used by Güttinger and Ackermans in using mainly the observation technique but with some other categories of activities. Some conclusions of this research are:

1. There is a significant relation between children's activities and the design of the residential environment: if children are offered more possibilities, they indeed use them. More diverse arrangements and facilities in play areas, in new as well as in old residential districts, are being used in more varied ways.

2. Every environment shows the same basic pattern of activities. This pattern is related to age and sex as well as to similar places in the area.

3. The guiding values presented in the first section of this paper appear to be relevant in comparing and evaluating aspects of residential environments.

V. CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION IN URBAN PLANNING SHOULD COMPRISE CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION TOO

In the Netherlands, participation of all adults in administrative procedures, especially in all kinds of planning, is accepted more and more. Of course, there are still a lot of problems everywhere in integrating participation in everyday administration. Indeed, it is a very complicated subject which pertains to several disciplines, such as administration, justice, sociology, psychology and political science. The political process itself is affected, for an extension of the political system and a widening of the political scene become necessary.

Participation in the planning of local communities, especially, needs the continuous critical attention of all residents to the management of their environment. Local participation affects the local political process, including party politics. It can develop consciousness about people's living environment to a higher level. In the Netherlands, it has grown into a broad movement, consisting of numerous organizations, local and nationwide, all keeping an eye on our precious milieu, our cities and neighborhoods, our woods and rivers, and in general guarding against pollution. We continue to learn to give citizen participation its proper place in our thinking and in the planning process, and to see it as a positive development; even though it complicates our procedures, it may ensure a better end result.

But what may children do in these matters? The answer to this question, we have discovered, is bound up with the answers to other questions about the position of children in our society, in our households, in families and in schools and all other institutions. I cannot offer much as an answer. I myself just started to ask this question in linking my basic trust in children with the idea that their originality, richness, wisdom and spontaneous honesty have much to offer us.

A research project begun in the spring of 1979 by J.W. de Zeeuw raises this issue. Called "Children - Participation - Living Environment", its main hypothesis is that by keeping children out of the planning process of our living environment we lose a richness of ideas and experiences. The ideas behind this hypothesis are:

1. We continuously overlook a very precious potential from the heart of our society: what children experience, feel and think.

2. We must explore this source as a humanizing factor for our planning, since children may have original perspectives that we may have lost as adults.

3. We can use administrative procedures as educational opportunities and world orientation projects for our children and youth.

In his research, de Zeeuw is

1. Exploring ways of working with children
   a) methods of communication
   b) application of all kinds of practical means of expressing concrete proposals
   c) the most desirable framework or institution to work in: some possibilities are schools, youth clubs, and community development projects.

2. Examining the administrative system for the most appropriate starting points and projects to work on
   a) Starting with clearly defined and concrete objects is probably best when working with children.
   b) Different projects may be best for different age groups.
   c) Can children become recognized participants in more extensive planning endeavors, such as an entire neighborhood or residential district?
   d) How do administrators (civil servants) react when we ask for their collaboration?

We are just starting to face many problems as well as to experience much that is positive in the emancipation of children and youth to a more recognized position in our world.

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SELEGREND: AN EXPERIMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN TO CREATE A RICHER ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN

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Environmental psychology is slowly emerging in Norway. Norwegians have begun consulting experts from various areas in environmental planning as well as forming committees concerned about the environment. Yet, in our opinion, electrical and construction engineers are still the planners of most large projects in Norway. Farming, too, is planned by engineers more and more; farms are growing bigger and the use of machinery is increasing.

Suburbs are planned by architects, engineers and experts in transportation and construction. The building of homes has changed character from a rather slow, individual process to the rapid production of many similar units. New housing areas are prepared by city planners, economists, lawyers and engineers.[1] The results have often been heavily criticized. For example, in one suburb outside Oslo, built during the 1970's, there was only a handful of playgrounds, and there was little contact between them and the housing. The surrounding area was windy and monotonous, and a good deal of noise could be heard for a considerable distance. Parents lived in constant fear of traffic accidents, yet there were no provisions for play inside the buildings. Children's play became destructive and violent, teenagers were a forgotten group, and there was little personal contact among the inhabitants.[2]

In Norway, about 70% of the inhabitants live in cities, towns or suburbs. The urbanizing process has been substantial: in the period 1962-70, urban living increased by 10%.

Norwegian environmental psychology has been very eclectic, seeking knowledge from all relevant areas. We believe, however, that Maslow's thinking has had a considerable impact,[3] as has the more ecological approach formulated by W.H. Ittelson:

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[1] Roe, Bjørn: Mennesket og det fysiske miljø, NTH, Trondheim; 1977.

[2] Raundalen, M. & Raundalen, T.S.: Er du pa var side! Universitets-forlaget, Oslo, 1979.

[3] Kjondal, J.: Oppvekst i boligomrade, Psykologisk Institutt, Universitetet i Oslo, 1976.

"environmental psychology ... sees man not as a passive product of his environment, but as a goal-directed being who acts upon his environment and who in turn is influenced by it. In changing his world, man changes himself. A guiding principle in this field is what we have called the dynamic interchange between man and his milieu. The traditional conception of a fixed environment to which organisms must adapt or perish is replaced by the ecological view that emphasizes the organism's role in creating its own environment."[4]

A variety of methods is used; Craik's classical approach[5] is often cited. Studies have been done using various methods, such as mail questionnaires and direct observation.[6] Some topics investigated to date include violence in the child's environment,[7] children's social networks in rural and urban areas,[8] children's use of time and space[9], and traffic accidents.[10]

Another category, known as action research, includes projects in which the investigator is part of the group under study and tries to describe central experiences which occur. Selegrend, a housing project 10 kilometers outside Norway's second largest city, Bergen, is the site of a project in that category. We will try to give a short description of our work there thus far, including the first evaluation, which comprised both interviews with mothers of 5 and 6-year old children and direct observations in the environment.

Selegrend is a settlement consisting of 112 flats in 92 semi-detached houses clustered around narrow, winding streets on 29,000 square meters of land. The planning, with the participation of the future inhabitants directed by elected officers, started in 1971 and the construction process, also with wide participation, was completed in 1975-76.

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[4] Ittelson, William, Harold M. Proshansky, Leanne G. Rivlin & Gary H. Winkel: An Introduction to Environmental Psychology: N.Y., Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1974, p. 5.

[5] Craik, K.H.: "Environmental Psychology" in New Directions in Psychology IV, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, N.Y., 1970.

[6] Lian, R., Thaule, J.: Barn og fysisk miljø, Psykologisk Institutt Universitetet i Oslo, 1972.

[7] Raundalen, M.: Tid for barn, Cappelen Forlag, 1975.

[8] Miljeteig-Olssen, P.: Barns sosiale nettverk, Psykologisk Institutt, Universitetet i Oslo, 1977.

[9] Iversen, Oddmar: Barn og bomiljø, Universitetet i Bergen, Psykologisk Institutt, 1978. Hjelle, J.: Skole-og hjemmemiljø, Universitetet i Bergen, Psykologisk Institutt, 1978; also, see Raundalen, M. Tid for barn, op. cit.

[10] Schioldborg, P.: Barnas Trafikklubb, Universitetet i Oslo, 1976; also see Raundalen, M. & Raundalen, T.S.: Er du pa var side! op. cit.

Down payments were approximately US $20,000 for the largest units (160 m^2); the State Housing Bank granted 40-year mortgages at 5.5% interest. The future occupants decided on the room arrangements of their own homes; they paid more for extra bathrooms, windows and the like. Some of the inhabitants made their entire down payments with their own participation in the construction process. People with low incomes were able to obtain both loans from the government and subsidies for monthly carrying charges of about US $200 for the large flats and US $100 for the smaller ones. About 40% of the flats were reserved for foreign workers, single-parent families, and senior citizens, as well as the physically and mentally handicapped, none of whom are usually found in high quality semi-detached houses.

We regard the following hypotheses about the features of good housing for children as plausible:

1. Family housing should be low rise, to allow easy communication between the dwellings and their surroundings.
2. The density of the houses should be high, to allow for easy access, within walking distance of the homes, to peers, by all categories of inhabitants.
3. There should be a broad and natural mixture of people, so that the children can become acquainted with people of different backgrounds, in different situations, and at different stages in the life cycle.
4. There should be a mixture of household types, not just conventional families.
5. There should be suitable paid employment available in the settlement.
6. The adults should engage in regular work outdoors in all seasons of the year. Property repairs and maintenance are necessary, and give children the opportunity to experience their parents' social interaction and to participate in meaningful activities themselves.
7. There should be common grounds and common localities for each settlement of 50-100 flats to make possible grass roots enterprises such as playschools and clubs.
8. Resident participation in planning and construction should result in a stable population.

The settlement has now functioned for almost three years; our impression is that the experiment functions according to expectations. The inhabitants' diversity has really enriched the settlement and not resulted in cliques.

An evaluation of the various aims of the project has been planned. The first two steps, interviews with parents of 4, 5 and 6-year old children, and observation of outdoor activities, have been completed. For comparison purposes, these procedures were performed as well at a similar settlement.

Twenty questionnaires, personally delivered in each settlement, included questions about the household, playgrounds, kindergartens, the child's situation outdoors, social networks, and general level of satisfaction with life in the settlement. The observations were planned according to Wright, based on specimen records which Wright defined as "a detailed, sequential, narrative account of behaviour and its immediate environmental context."[11]

The observations were conducted between three and seven in the afternoon. The observers walked certain rounds. No observation period lasted longer than 40 minutes; what was seen was immediately dictated, using a tape recorder; the tapes were transcribed and revised on the same day. Twenty observations were completed, all between January 8 and 30.

The mean age of the children in households completing the questionnaire was 4.9 years. The observations included all children seen during the observation periods. A striking difference between Selegrend and the control settlement emerged from the first question about what the children did during the day. Almost all of the 5-6-year olds in Selegrend attended kindergarten, in contrast to only 30% in the control settlement. Family income, social status, age, time lived in the settlement, and moving plans were all quite similar for the two populations.

From Table 1, we can see that there is a considerable difference between the two settlements concerning where the members of residents' social networks live. Most of the friends of the 5-6-year olds at Selegrend are neighbors.

TABLE 1: WHERE DO THE PARENTS' SOCIAL NETWORKS LIVE?

	Selegrend	Control Settlement
In same settlement	55%	20%
Other parts of community	25%	35%
Outside Bergen	10%	25%

From other Norwegian investigations, we know that this is not typical.

Table 2 shows that good friendships among a few neighbors dominate the Selegrend climate.

From the observations, we have a variety of data covering children's activities and interactions of a more general nature which will not be described in detail here. Sex differences in using outdoor facilities were also observed.

[11] Wright, W., cited in Iversen, O., Barn og bomiljø, op. cit.

TABLE 2: TYPES OF CONTACT AMONG NEIGHBORS

	Selegrend	Control Settlement
Regular contact with most of the inhabitants	25%	30%
Good friends with a few	75%	40%
Normal politeness	20%	40%

In comparing the two settlements, two main differences emerged, one probably caused by structural differences and the other from social ones. Since the observations were performed during January, one would expect skiing and sledding. This was true to a much higher degree for Selegrend than for the control settlement. While the children of the control settlement could ski at several places, they did not, while most of the children at Selegrend gathered at the hills meant for winter activities. The other marked difference was that considerably fewer children were seen playing outdoors in the afternoon in Selegrend. Many children were observed running from one door to another with playthings under their arms; inquiry revealed that most of the 5-6-year olds in Selegrend played indoors with friends during the afternoons, which grow dark early in winter in Norway.

It seems justified to conclude that the Selegrend experiment, based on extensive participation in planning and construction, on planned variation in age and occupational as well as social background, and rather high density, has resulted in a friendly milieu for 5-6-year old children and their parents. Whether systematic investigation will show similar reactions from other age groups remains to be seen.

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BUT THAT'S WHERE THE CHILDREN HAVE TO LIVE: USING URBAN SOCIAL FABRIC IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN*

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* The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the department.

I. INTRODUCTION

Popular wisdom claims that community is dying - is dead. The morning newspaper, the weekly magazine and television, as well as scholarly publications, bemoan the loss. The focus of this paper is to examine some of the theories and empirical data about how communities do function today, and to consider the kinds of support which would help them to function in ways which enhance the lives of children. Community may be dead or sick, but it is an important part of the context in which children grow up. Moreover, communities can function in ways which provide opportunities for adults to form various types of personal support networks. Given the high rate of mobility of the society, growing divorce rate and increasing numbers of single-parent families, helping parents form personal and community support networks may be the best way to strengthen support for children.

This paper will briefly examine some theories of community and social networks, and then consider today's community of "limited liability" (Janowitz, 1952), some methods of creating strong community groups, and how those groups can help provide resources for children both directly and through strengthening adult networks.

II. SOME TYPES OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Barry Wellman has characterized theories about community as "Community Lost", "Community Saved" and "Community Liberated" (Wellman: 1979). The first approach, developed by sociologists in the nineteenth century, claimed that people in cities live alone or in nuclear families, isolated and alienated. The second approach, "Community Saved", "found" community in ethnic neighborhoods where people lived in extended families with constant visiting among relatives. Life focused around the neighborhood church, bar, and corner grocery store. Streets were places for people to meet friends, gossip and observe each other. The third approach considers the relations of each individual to others, both those he knows himself and those he has indirect contact with through people he knows who know them. These networks

can be "close-knit", like those described under "Community Saved", or "loose-knit" when the persons known to an individual are not necessarily known to each other. Individuals vary in terms of the types of relationships they want, and communities vary in terms of the types of relationships most likely to develop (Bott, 1957, 1971; Wellman, 1979).

Two other types of relationships, "weak ties" and "intimate secondary relationships", are important in communities. "Weak ties" is Granovetter's term to describe relationships among people who do not maintain regular contact, such as former classmates who meet at a reunion. Middle management men found them more helpful in gaining access to jobs than "close-knit" ties (Granovetter, 1973, 1974). Such ties can be important in providing information and access to people who live outside the neighborhood.

"Intimate secondary relationships" is a term I developed to describe relations which have some of the characteristics of primary relations and some of those of secondary ones. I observed them among members of voluntary boards of directors in several communities. Participants in an "intimate secondary relationship" experience a sense of warmth and rapport. They know each other's characteristics enough to trust each other or to determine that trust is not warranted. They tend, however, not to meet socially outside of the setting of the "intimate secondary relationship" and not to share information about family, tastes or personal business. The commitment is limited in time. Thus, while they are occurring, "intimate secondary relationships" create an intensity of involvement normally characteristic of a more primary relationship, but with very clear limits. They offer a way for people to have some intimacy, yet maintain some distance (Wireman, 1977a, 1978a and 1978b).

For a community, intimate secondary relationships can be important in providing newcomers with a chance to feel at home quickly, yet avoid making premature commitments to friendships. They can provide support for individuals during periods of marital strain and give women the opportunity to develop new skills and supportive relationships without having an affair or taking a job. They also permit meaningful contacts between persons of different races, classes or socio-economic levels. They seem to develop around the conduct of public business in a public place. The public place helps to establish the public nature of the role responsibilities involved. It avoids the host-guest connotations often created when meetings are held in private homes. The implications for children are that such relationships, and networks of such relationships around a community, can provide access to the external world, as well as enable neighbors of different backgrounds to plan environments and services together to meet the needs of their children.

III. THE COMMUNITY OF "LIMITED LIABILITY"

Regardless of the type of community and relations within it, specific environmental design and services and facilities are determined not only by the individual relationships among the adults living there, but also by a variety of forces external to the area. These will be considered next.

Roland Warren has described a "great change" which has been occurring in American life with the "increasing orientation of community units toward extracommunity systems" and a corresponding decline in community cohesion and autonomy (Warren, 1978:53). The change has occurred through increased division of labor, differentiation of interests and association, greater systemic relationships to the larger society, bureaucratization and impersonalization, transfer of functions to profit enterprises and to government, urbanization and suburbanization, and changing values. Warren distinguishes between the community's vertical pattern, "the relationships through which they are oriented to the larger society beyond the community" (Warren, 1978, p. 240) and its horizontal pattern of "the structural and functional relation of its various social units and subsystems to each other" (Warren, 1963, p. 162). The local school district and local welfare department might have horizontal relations with each other, but each would have stronger vertical relations with various state and federal agencies.

Warren has listed a number of criteria for considering the extent to which the delivery of services can be accomplished in a manner which is tailored to the needs of the particular community. These include:

1. psychological identification
2. autonomy
3. coincidence of boundaries
4. horizontal integration

Assessing psychological identification means determining whether the institution considers itself a part of the community. A church whose members live nearby, for example, is more likely to have staff psychologically identified with the neighborhood and its needs than a local branch of the post office.

Autonomy refers to the extent to which the institution establishes its own goals and policies and thus could potentially change them in relation to local needs. A franchise hamburger chain, for example, cannot change its menu to include ethnic snacks.

Coincidence of boundaries refers to the fact that most institutions have boundaries which do not coincide with those of a particular neighborhood or with those of other institutions serving that neighborhood. People living on opposite sides of a street can find themselves in different congressional districts, different school districts, the same park district, the same police and fire service area, but different hospital zones. In addition, each federal and state agency has different guidelines for its programmes and different requirements for citizen participation in its programmes. The lack of coincidence of boundaries and programme requirements makes rational planning and coordination of services extremely difficult.

Horizontal integration is the extent to which the institution has strong bonds to other institutions in the neighborhood as opposed to the strength of its relationships with outside institutions. For example, a local retail merchant may be very involved in his relationships with a neighborhood group. An office which stores the records and does accounting for a

large national firm is less dependent upon local good will. Moreover, an employee of the branch office of a national organization will not usually be promoted on the basis of his contribution to local community good.

What does this mean in terms of children? It means that their parents have limited control over the environment and over the institutions which provide services. Major decisions affecting income, educational trends and health practices are likely to be formulated by national bureaucracies. Nevertheless, the local community is the end delivery system for many services, as well as the location for many facilities. Most important, it is the daily habitat of children. It can be examined in terms of children's needs to see what types of locally-based improvements might be possible, either through direct changes in the types of services and facilities provided, or through strengthening networks supportive of parents and parenting. One means of accomplishing this is through strong citizen groups.

IV. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

The United States has always had a tradition of active volunteer participation in government. The idea of deliberate, structured participation by citizens in government programmes grew rapidly after the enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which called for "maximum feasible participation" by those affected by the programme. Since then, a number of agencies have created avenues for citizen involvement in their programmes.

Definitions of citizen participation vary but most focus on helping representative government work through making the bureaucracies which carry out programmes more responsive to citizens. Two broad purposes are:

1. to influence policy decisions and the allocation of resources, and
2. to share in the design, implementation and monitoring of specific programmes (Yin, 1973).

Generally, efforts to implement programmes require a collaborate relationship between citizen and bureaucrat while efforts to obtain greater resources often result in conflict methods.

Benefits for agencies are potential support for programmes and more effective results. Benefits for individuals include personal growth, lessening of alienation feelings, obtaining some programme improvements and creating personal and community networks, especially intimate secondary relationships. Citizen participation, however, generally has been limited as a means of achieving social reform (Wireman, 1977b).

In order for citizen participation to be successful, the following conditions are helpful, if not essential:

1. The group must have a clear mandate for participation, preferably based on legislation;
2. The group must be strong enough to command respect (a representative community group has more respect from decision-makers than one which only has a narrow constituency);
3. The group must have ongoing access to information and decision-makers through the entire planning process, especially before key decisions (such as budget decisions) are made;
4. It must have staff and technical assistance from individuals it trusts, preferably accountable to the group;
5. It must have training and skills in group processes;
6. It must have access to higher levels of government or the courts if local officials refuse to permit valid participation (Wireman, 1977b).

While some citizen groups continue to focus on participation in connection with government programmes, others focus on running programmes themselves. Some develop and operate one or two programmes, such as a day-care centre or a food purchasing cooperative. Many of the more imaginative programmes have been developed initially by local community groups, then expanded into government pilot projects and finally national programmes. Other groups have undertaken ambitious programmes of urban revitalization covering housing rehabilitation and economic development (Hallman, 1977; Perlman, 1976; Kollias, 1977). An emphasis on neighborhoods and voluntary efforts of local citizens is part of President Carter's urban policy.

The potential of community groups for making neighborhoods better places for children is strong. Here are several ways:

a) Services and Facilities

Residents can influence the number and types of services and facilities. Take, for example, the basic need for food. Although families bear the most direct responsibility for feeding children, community groups can manage a variety of helpful projects including nutrition courses, cooperative buying clubs or stores, and community gardens. They can pressure local establishments in regard to quality, variety and price as well as hours which stores are open for business. They can pressure city institutions in regard to location and overall health regulation of stores, and convenience of obtaining food stamps. They can cooperate with national organizations lobbying on matters governed by non-local institutions.

Obtaining appropriate services and facilities includes ensuring that the physical settings are designed appropriately and that staff is responsive to children's needs. One woman, for example, complained about a long wait in a hospital reception area where there was nothing to do. At the hospital's request, she redesigned it into a play corner (Lewis, 1979).

Children themselves have been successfully involved in participatory planning for parks. Robin Moore developed an ecological school yard with dirt, water and gardens built primarily by local residents and their children. Some designers are convinced that unless the children, including teenagers, are involved in park planning, the park will not be respected (Hester, 1975). The same principle applies to community gardens. When asked, during the second year that gardens were planted, one gardener in Philadelphia commented that there had been no vandalism that year because all the former vandals had been given their own garden plots (Goldstein, 1979).

b) Community Design and Neighboring Responsibility

Effective resident involvement in citizen participation and advocacy planning to make local spaces suitable for children's needs means more than negotiating with city agencies to get more playgrounds. It means an active refocusing by all neighborhood residents and institutions on making the environment pleasant for children.

Recently, the author was buying dinner in the neighborhood fast food chain. A girl, about eight years old, very politely asked for a drink of water. The teenager serving politely explained that according to company policy, she could only give water to people buying something. The author, who was entitled to water, gave the water to the child, who shyly thanked her. The incident was minor, but strangely shocking. There was a lack of generosity that seemed not only ungracious but short-sighted, given a history of antagonism between neighborhood stores and the adjacent public housing where the child probably lived.

A different aspect of the same general philosophy is the need to establish neighborhood norms whereby adults can and do assume responsibility for children in public places. This is even more necessary where racial and class differences exist. In one community, which had basically good racial relations, the white women were actually being terrorized by black six-year olds! The black parents found it insulting that their white neighbors did not demand proper behavior from their children, concluding that whites assumed black children could not be expected to behave as well as white ones. Black teenagers, middle class sons of lawyers, "hung around" the shopping centre in old blue jeans to "put on" white customers to see if they would react in fear. Often they did, even though the banter was similar to that of their own children. The racial stereotypes were then reinforced on both sides. Occasionally, an adult simply told the teenagers to behave, which they did (Wireman, 1977a; Burkhart, 1975).

c) Active Attention to Outside Institutions

As mentioned earlier, and as will again be illustrated in the next section, many forces impacting children's lives cannot be changed at a neighborhood level. Neighborhood groups have, however, been important in focusing national attention on major issues. Inner-city banks, for example, long have taken deposits from inner-city residents and reinvested them in the suburbs, while refusing mortgage money for inner-city neighborhoods. National

legislation to correct this was the direct result of grass-roots community organizations. Recent national attention to the problems of battered women arose from coalitions of local women's groups struggling to establish shelters for them.

V. ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES FOR MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Thus, local community activities can contribute directly to meeting children's needs. In turn, local community groups and institutions can be strengthened by providing for citizen involvement in programme planning. All local and federal programmes and local private agencies should provide for such involvement. As noted earlier, in order for citizen involvement to be meaningful, citizens must have appropriate technical assistance, must be consulted before decisions are made, must have adequate information, and must have access to the decision-makers.

Community operation of some programmes can be made an available option. Not all community groups have the capacity for or interest in operating programmes, but some do. Community groups have successfully operated a variety of social service programmes and are now undertaking substantial rehabilitation efforts. They, like any growing small business, need access to capital, management training and technical assistance. Various sorts of technical assistance and training could be offered to leaders of different community organizations simultaneously. Given today's mobility patterns, as well as the exhaustion of most volunteers after several years, constant training is necessary if organizations are to have capable leaders. Providing public meeting places may not only be convenient, but necessary as a means of encouraging a network of intimate secondary relationships available for varied community purposes.

Local communities also can develop practices and engage in activities which assist other components of the social fabric in meeting children's needs. Ways of strengthening family function include providing broader housing and neighborhood options. More low-income and moderate-income housing is needed, as well as affirmative action against discrimination. Alternatives not often available now include extra bedrooms or separate but attached units for grandparents, as well as housing for the elderly or nursing homes more generally available in neighborhoods. Regulations for various types of public programmes need to be examined to ensure that they permit a distant relative, such as an aunt or second cousin, to live as a member of the family. Housing and neighborhoods can be planned in a manner which permits single women to meet their social and household needs more easily. For example, assistance in making home repairs may be all that is needed to keep a newly-widowed, separated or divorced mother from moving away from a home and neighborhood where she and her children have long been established. Full-time, part-time and after-school child care also needs to be more broadly available.

In some cases, assistance from one type of resource can be substituted for another. Thus, maternal and child nutrition programmes can compensate for the low wages for women which result from discrimination; public child care can substitute for child care by nearby grandparents. In some

cases, however, strengthening one part of the network system will not result in increased support for the child. For example, in helping low income youth make realistic job choices, strengthening their "weak ties" and networks of "intimate secondary relationships" may provide much better access to opportunities outside the neighborhood than would strengthening their contacts with kin.

Policy-makers can deliberately structure programme delivery in a manner which provides most support for families, community groups and institutions and which is most likely to facilitate the growth of social networks. Some examples of appropriate programme delivery are:

1. Community gardens operated by residents of the surrounding blocks.
2. Youth jobs programmes conducted by a community group providing home repairs and weatherproofing for the neighborhood elderly.
3. Cooperatives, including grocery stores and cooperative housing.
4. Service exchanges, including tutoring, child care, tool lending, home repairs, and
5. Local delivery of a range of services through little city halls, community health centres, community schools and community designed parks.

Neighborhoods can enhance all of the types of networks discussed earlier. More attention needs to be given to design of urban neighborhoods in general to determine the types of spaces which support different types of relationships. (For an example of this concept in connection with housing for the elderly, see Wireman, 1979b.) We do, however, know that the major way to strengthen networks is to avoid destroying them through inappropriate urban renewal or insensitive urban revitalization, which increase taxes and rentals with no consideration of the effect on the existing residents.

The above discussion has merely indicated a few methods of strengthening families, networks and community institutions. This may be the most productive method of providing adequate support for children. Even in our mobile society, children do not have independent access to transportation. For them, families and communities remain important, because that's where they have to live.

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DESIGNING CHILDREN'S SPATIAL ENVIRONMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Soviet psychologist D.V. Elkonin has described very exactly the role of the interaction between the child and the environment: "For the development of a child's personality, surroundings become not a condition of development, but a source of development." (21, 15).

The optimum for urban surroundings is determined by the complexity and completeness of the content of all those components which are necessary for children's comprehensive and harmonious development. In other words, construction that more fully satisfies children's biological and socially conditioned needs (according to Maslow's scheme), and so the needs of the public as a whole, is necessary in a city and its suburbs. It follows that the work of designing and constructing appropriate buildings should be managed by the social institution especially organized for such purposes. Conversely, the quality of a building constructed for children can be assessed according to the degree that its social function is realized and to the possibilities that it offers the child.

The outstanding Japanese architect Kenzo Tange has said, "Architects and designers are the only intermediaries between engineering and individuals, so it is very important that along with developing the science they display more and more creative activity" (18, 86-87). Forming and developing urban surroundings by means of architecture so that they can more fully and more exactly meet children's needs and interests is an important scientific and creative task. This paper is oriented to a short demonstration of such work in the USSR, and also towards the methods of solving practical problems of architecture and construction applying to the management of urban space in the interest of children.

II. THE SOVIET SETTING

a) Urbanization

The USSR is a country of active growth; 62% of the population live in cities (16; 7). Considerable attention is paid to those of our cities with centuries-old histories. Other cities of our country continue to grow; they are improved, and new districts appear in them. Since the Great

October Socialist Revolution of 1917, 1,200 new cities have come into existence; between 1976 and 1981, about 90 new cities will appear on the map of our country.

b) The System of Public Service Institutions

The rights of the people to education and health, to benefit from the achievements of culture and science, and to rest, given in the Constitution of the Soviet Union, find their realization in the country's complex system of social services. Its main feature is a subsystem of institutions for children and juveniles. It is universalistic, and includes networks of special institutions such as infant feeding centres, clinics, hospitals and sanatoria; music, art and sports schools; libraries, cinemas and theatres of different kinds; and clubs, children's parks and playgrounds, and pioneer camps.

The programme accepted at the XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1961) set ensuring a happy childhood for every child as the most important and noble task (12, 98). The amounts in the national budget earmarked for services and education for children increase constantly along with intensive capital construction. From 1961 to 1975, expenditures for children's services increased 3.2 times, and for education, 2.6 times (22, 207). The number of beds for children in hospitals has almost doubled, and the number of children being served in sanatoria and by pediatricians has increased 1.6 times (22, 206).

The main body of institutions for the younger generation is the Soviet system of public education. Schooling of any kind is free, and secondary education is universal and compulsory. Education is available in a range of citizens' mother tongues; teaching is conducted in 57 languages (15, 224). About 40% of all capital investment in public construction is for children's preschool institutions and schools.

From 3 to 3.5 thousand kindergartens and creches are built in the country annually; the same number of schools is also constructed. By the beginning of 1979, 122 thousand preschool institutions were functioning in the USSR, serving 13.3 million children; 44.7 million children were being educated in 150 thousand schools. The dynamic development of these mass institutions in the USSR is shown in Table 1.

c) Government Controls

A state system of construction rationing for the various levels of political organization is used in the USSR. We apply a whole complex of quantitative and qualitative norms, which we differentiate as necessary according to the great variety of our climatic conditions, as well as state and regional peculiarities. Design norms are constantly reviewed and corrected under the influence of three factors:

1. Periodic correction of social purposes and methods of realizing them;

TABLE 1

	1940	1965	1970	1975	1978
Number of children in preschool institutions (million)	2.0	7.7	9.3	11.5	13.3
Number of preschool institutions (thousand)	46	92	103	115	122
Number of children at preschool institutions per 1000 persons	10.3	33.1[1]	38.5	45.4	51.2
Number of children attending comprehensive schools (million)	35.6	48.3	49.2	47.6	44.7
Number of comprehensive schools (thousand)	199	214	190	164	150

[1] 1966

Source: (16;7, 33, 233 & 22; 149, 203)

2. Our continuously increasing economic base;
3. Application of those achievements of scientifc and engineering progress which are appropriate for accomplishing social tasks.

Since we develop our norms for the design and construction of a given building with the participation of those state bodies which will be responsible for using it, we can affirm that the norms are isomorphic and are estimated to achieve quite definite social and economic purposes, in such areas as childrearing and education, public health, culture, trade, and everyday repairs and services.

d) Organization of Research

The system of norms and rules is one of the main results of scientific investigations. Applied architectural and construction science by its nature is anthropocentric. It makes extensive use of the findings of other sciences and requires, for solving many problems, the organization of interdisciplinary groups of scientists, including sociologists, hygienists, pedagogues and others. In the USSR, the means for conducting such research is state planning. Appropriate scientific investigations are included in our five-year plans for social and economic development. The management of planning and the controls for the fulfilment of the plans are the responsibility of the State Committee of Civil Construction and Architecture under

the Department of State Construction. The chief institute in the field of investigation and design for children, juveniles and youth is the Central Scientific Research and Design Institute. This institute develops standard and experimental plans for preschool institutions, elementary and secondary schools, and institutions for higher learning. The institute has branches in Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi, Novosibirsk and Tashkent, which conduct analogous work conforming to the specific conditions of the large regions of our country: the north, the southern European part, the Caucasus, Siberia and Central Asia.

Investigations are conducted according to the programmes of the head institute and under its management, with the participation of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, the Ministry of Public Health (especially the Research Institute for Child and Adolescent Hygiene[1]), higher educational institutions, and others. A range of appropriate research methods is used, but in all cases domestic and foreign building design, construction, and use are studied. Cooperation of our institutes with appropriate institutes of other countries, such as the members of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid, brings useful assistance.

For the last 15 years, the experimental construction of new types of civil buildings and living complexes has been growing in the USSR. Besides residences, the greatest number of experimental buildings constructed in the USSR is for kindergartens and schools. Neither the scale nor, especially, the rate of experimental construction, satisfy us yet. We recognize the need for continuous evaluation of both our hypotheses and our experimental buildings and building complexes in order to make changes in them, if necessary, before their principles are made part of our norms and before their mass installation as typical projects throughout the Soviet Union.

e) Standardized Designs

Buildings for preschool institutions, schools, pioneer camps and other institutions listed earlier are constructed according to plans developed by means of the process just described. These plans are developed with funds apportioned from the national budget. The client institution buying a project pays only for the cost of its copy of the plans. Ninety-six percent of all kindergartens and 91% of all schools are constructed according to these plans. These figures indicate the great responsibility those who design the plans have for what is built for children in the Soviet Union.

At present, 159 different plans for kindergartens and 309 plans for schools and boarding schools are available for both urban and rural construction. A great range of designs and materials is offered for buildings of equal capacity meant for identical conditions in order to prevent monotony, and to offer the possibility for choice and more subtle accounting for building conditions in particular locations. Plans are also available for

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[1] See G.N. Serdukovskaya, "Environmental Influences on Children's Health" in this report.

equipment for kindergartens and schools, including albums of interior appointments and decor. It should be added that special state staff examine completed projects in order to supervise the maintenance of norms and rules.

III. NETWORKS OF INSTITUTIONS

a) Morphology

In the USSR, our networks of preschool institutions, schools and special institutions are designed as an indivisible system for the harmonious upbringing and education of children and juveniles. Unity of social purpose determines the system's integrity, which is provided by the complete, systematic distribution of institutions within cities according to the ages of children to be served by them. The most important institutions are schools (17, 71). Playgrounds, kindergartens and schools are always situated near the homes of those children who will use them. As it is impossible for the full range of other children's facilities to be near all homes, priorities are established, based on the statistical distribution of the locations of the homes of those children whose needs will be served by the various facilities (See Table 2).

b) Quantitative Indices

Networks of institutions are estimated, designed and provided in the general urban planning process according to the following normative indices:

1. Kindergartens: to be provided for between 60% and 75% of all the children of preschool age in a given city or settlement (up to 80% in new cities, because of their youthful populations and high rates of child-bearing);
2. Schools providing general primary and secondary education: to be provided for 100% of all pupils who are given primary education (I-VIII forms); 75% of all children who complete secondary education; the remaining 25%, who are given the compulsory secondary education required by law, which is provided in technical and professional schools for training skilled workers, and in other special secondary schools;
3. Palaces and houses of pioneers: to be provided on the basis of 4 places for 1000 inhabitants.

c) Spatial Planning

The location of children's facilities is based on convenient access for those who will use them.

1. Kindergartens of general type and schools providing general education are situated within the settlement areas of a city demarcated by main streets. Hence, children

TABLE 2

Approximate Distribution of Institutions
for Children Other Than Schools

	Size of City, Thousand Inhabitants				
	30-50	50-100	100-250	250-500	500 and more
House of Pioneers and Schoolchildren	+	+	+	+	+
Palace of Pioneers and Schoolchildren	-	-	(+)	+	+
Young technician station	-	-	(+)	+	+
Young naturalist station	-	-	(+)	+	+
Sports school for children and youth	(+)[1]	+	+	+	+
Children's excursion and tourist station	-	-	(+)	+	+
Children's music school	-	(+)	+	+	+
Children's art school	-	-	-	+	+
Children's library	(+)[2]	(+)	+	+	+
Children's cinema	-	-	-	(+)	+
Puppet theatre	-	-	(+)	+	+
Children's theatre	-	-	-	(+)	+
Children's stadium	-	-	-	(+)	+
Children's park	-	-	(+)	+	+
Children's swimming pool	-	-	-	(+)	+
Children's railway, river steam line or flotilla	-	-	-	(+)	+

(+) possible availability of institution

Notes: 1 - May be combined with the Palace of Pioneers and school children
2 - In towns of up to 100 thousand inhabitants, the town library has a children's department.

Source: (17, 76)

attending these institutions need not cross streets with a high traffic density; this principle is considered very important in the Soviet Union. Our norms are:

a) Not more than 300m from dwellings to kindergartens.

b) Not more than 500m from dwellings to schools.

2. In areas of medium to high density, norms for facilities providing extracurricular activities are:

a) Either 1500m, or not more than 20 minutes' travelling time, for institutions serving several neighborhoods; or

b) Not more than 30 minutes' travelling time by public transport, for a facility intended to serve an entire city;

c) Exceptions are made for special institutions, such as country cottages for kindergartens, and pioneer camps.

d) Lots

Plots of land for preschool institutions and schools must be spacious enough and planted with trees, and must have some grounds and equipment for activities of different kinds. Soviet norms for lot size are:

a) For kindergartens, not less than 35 sq. m. for one child;

b) For schools, from 20 to 24 sq. m.

Standards for playgrounds in the USSR are:

a) One playground of 0.03 hectare, serving preschool children for every 1000 inhabitants;

b) For children of primary school age, 0.04 hectare;

c) For sports for both children of school age and adults, 0.12 hectare.

Adherence is obligatory, and these playgrounds must be provided directly within the residential area.

IV. TYPOLOGY

a) Types of Buildings for Kindergartens and Schools

Presently, the comprehensive preschool institution is accepted for city building. It is a kindergarten which serves groups of children under three and groups of children from 3 to 7 years of age. It has been found that this type of institution provides good opportunities for children to pass through the stages of their development. Moreover, it is more convenient for parents and children, as transferring the older preschooler from

the first institution he or she attended to another is not necessary. In consequence, the earlier practice of constructing separate creches and kindergartens is no longer followed. Nevertheless, a small number of separate kindergartens and creches exists in Soviet cities.

Kindergartens in cities are usually built for 140-160 children (6-7 groups) or 280-320 children (12-14 groups). In large cities with multistorey apartment houses, a kindergarten serving, according to the norm, a radius of 300m can consist of several buildings for groups of children and an administration building. The capacity of such complexes is 560-640 children (24-28 groups); they are not yet widespread.

Schools for general education in urban settlements usually have 30, 40 or 50 classrooms, being intended for 1176, 1568 or 1960 pupils respectively. Large school complexes for 3500-4000 seats have been built in many cities. In the USA, existing norms permit construction of school buildings for up to 2400 seats; a great many schools seating 1350 to 2100 children have been built in the UK, and some new school complexes in France are intended for 4000 seats (17, 59, 60). In the USSR, the construction of large school complexes will be continued.

b) Main Design Principles

Hygienic and pedagogical requirements have a considerable effect on both site planning and spatial arrangements for creche-kindergartens. The main criterion here is the extent to which the conditions of the material-spatial environment correspond to the requirements and conditions of physical, intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic preschool education, taking into account children's ages and individual traits.

The hygienic requirements determine the basic normative principle of the structural pattern of creche-kindergartens and their sites. Isolation of the premises and playgrounds for different age groups while maintaining functional links with the premises for other groups and premises for general use is mandatory; each group must also be able to reach the premises for general use without having to pass through other groups' areas. Building height is restricted to two stories. According to an international evaluation of preschool facilities, the Soviet norms are the most exacting (8; 22).

The Soviet school is being developed as a single general education, trade, and polytechnical school. It is intended to provide secondary education, extensive polytechnical preparation and a wide professional orientation. The school must provide adequate conditions for an active educational process, all-round personality development, and development of individual children's abilities according to their inclinations.

The spatial pattern of school buildings is determined mainly by pedagogical requirements; differences in the premises grow out of the requirements for the various age groups: junior, middle and senior. The structural arrangement of premises for junior schoolchildren is based on providing

a limited number of classrooms, a recreation area, and toilets in isolation from other premises in such a way that they permit no passage for schoolchildren of other age groups.

The height of urban school buildings may not exceed three stories, although in some cases, four-storey school buildings are permitted in older residential areas. The school site is divided into zones for different age groups and includes areas for recreation, sports and teaching.

c) Interior Plan

Preschool institutions have two kinds of premises: for different age groups and for general use. For each age group, a section is arranged as a "collective flat". It includes:

1. Premises for removing and keeping outerwear, and for changing and storing other clothes;
2. Space for studies, games and meals;
3. Sleeping space;
4. Toilets;
5. Auxiliary buffet room.

Sociological investigations in the USSR have shown that child morbidity is 1.5-2 times less at creches and kindergartens with bedrooms in every collective flat than at creches and kindergartens with one universal bedroom. New design norms which take this finding into account were introduced; they stipulate the necessity of two general rooms in each collective flat.

The overall floor space for creches is 5.7 sq. m. per child; for kindergartens, 5.3 sq. m. In general, urban preschool institutions allow 6.4 to 7.0 sq. m. of floor space per child. The above figures are characteristic for construction in the middle climatic zone of this country, and are higher in northern regions.

The general hall for musical and physical culture studies is intended for alternate use by different age groups. In addition to the above, the creche-kindergartens built in northern regions include a swimming pool, a second hall, and indoor non-heated verandahs for walks in case of bad weather.

In the USSR a "subject room" system of teaching is adopted, according to which junior pupils (1st-4th grades) have their classes in fixed classrooms, while each subject studied by pupils of the 5th-10th grades is taught in a special room, laboratory or shop; pupils pass from one room to another. All schools have assembly halls which are also used for films and lectures, canteens where meals for all schoolchildren are prepared, one or two gymnasia, a library, and audiovisual centres, as well as premises for social work.

School buildings and their sites are used for out-of-school activities, such as those of sports associations and other special interest groups. Besides, all schools have premises for the so-called "long stay groups", in which, according to parental wish, children, chiefly in junior classes, stay at school after the lessons are over, and engage in such activities as preparing their homework under teachers' guidance; resting and playing on the premises indoors and out; and going for excursions.

In general, 3.7-3.9 sq. m. of floor space, excluding the corridors and technical premises, are allowed for each child in the design of urban schools of different types. In northern regions this figure is higher; in southern ones, lower.

There are, in the USSR, quite a number of urban schools with swimming pools, although they were not included in the building standards until 1974. New building standards introduced in 1974 provide for the construction of one swimming pool to serve a group of schools.

d) Hygienic Factors

Children's needs are taken into account in the design and construction of childcare facilities on the basis of research done by hygienists. It is natural that the requirements for creche-kindergartens are formulated in the most careful way, because children of preschool age are helpless in many ways and sensitive in many respects. Besides the requirements mentioned above, the design standards for creche-kindergartens and schools stipulate, for example, a high level of natural lighting, strict cardinal point orientation, effective natural ventilation (except for the northern regions), and different temperatures within the premises, as appropriate. They also include, for example, detailed indications as to the floors and their parameters (in some cases floors are heated), design solutions for interiors that reduce the possibility of injuries, and finishing materials which permit efficient cleaning. The National Chief Health Officer's Service determines whether certain synthetic materials can be used in childcare institutions, forbidding some of them or permitting their partial use, based on the results of tests.

V. ARCHITECTURAL ADAPTATIONS IN BUILDING FOR CHILDREN

a) Importance of the Surroundings

It would be a truism to say that the environment influences us and affects our spirits. It is, however, a fact that architecture not only has technological goals, but also a psychological function. Without underestimating the importance of building design for everyone's emotional and intellectual life, it is necessary to stress its special importance for children and teenagers, mainly because these young people spend so much of their time in institutional settings and, more important, the atmosphere in these settings constitutes the material and spiritual environment for their development.

The famous Russian physiologist Sechenov said, "Nowhere is the dependence of psychic content upon the environment reflected in such a

strikingly pronounced way as in children, this dependence lasting for years" (14; 258, 412). K. Koffka (9; 35) pointed out that the role of the environment can induce, activate or slow a child's development.

According to the opinion of Soviet experts, while Freud and his followers overestimated the importance of nervous shocks in early childhood, considering them the single reason of neuroses in adults, it is nevertheless evident that many pathological manifestations in adults can be explained by insufficiently careful attitudes towards children's nervous systems.

In consequence, such means as provision of special comfortable rooms for sleeping for all age groups in creche-kindergartens; elimination of visual disorder and overloading in the child's sensory field; provision of sufficient space for motor activity; adequate use of color from the psycho-physiological viewpoint; and provision of the possibility for a child both to take part in collective games and studies and to be alone should not be neglected.

b) A Problem

Since the psycho-physiological and nervous-psychic constitution of children differs in principle from that of adults, children's characteristics should be determined in order to make an attempt to establish a relationship between them and the rules for designing the spatial environment for children. Optimizing children's material environment, which is created in the first place by architectural means, taking into consideration the differences in abilities among children of different ages, can create the most favorable conditions for teaching and learning. In doing so, the difficulty is not shortage of research results but abundance, variety and, more important, the almost insurmountable problem of adequately interpreting knowledge gained in other sciences for the needs of applied architecture.

c) Perceptual Specifications

The most general requirements placed upon the spatial arrangement of buildings for children, resulting from studies of children's psycho-physiology, nervous-psychic constitution and peculiarities of perception, are based on the following principles:

1. Simplicity in everything: the world surrounding the child should not be like a kaleidoscope (19; 49) because if saturated, taste and interest, the basic motivating power of development, become less keen. This is a common rule of visual culture for children.

2. Form should be simple, clear and precise. Children do not yet have socially-conditioned experience; their sensory models of geometrical shapes are not yet formed. As experiments have shown, the child does not perceive any deviation from the simplest forms, subconsciously taking the "irregularity" of the shape as a simple stable shape familiar to him or her (11; 113 and 3; 166).

3. Contour: 3-4-year old children do not distinguish contour as a necessary informative sign.

4. Color, when it is used for informative purposes, should be solid, with the background for colored details preferably achromatic. It is necessary to avoid color and light contrasts for extended periods, as children's eyes tire quickly.

The results of studies of age changes in visual perception of different aspects of objects (color, shape, location, size, proportions) have shown that the age of four-six years is characterized mainly by color orientation; seven-nine years, by form orientation; and twenty years, by proportions. In perception in adults, color is least important (4; 14).

Color discernment in children begins at about the age of three months (5; 118 and others). The general law of its development is as follows: at first, light and warm colors; later, dark and cold colors; then, differentiation of green and blue-violet tones (3; 167).

Some time ago, there was a very popular theory that physiologically optimal tones, in practice, different variations of green, should be used in school interiors. Research has shown that, not the range of colors itself, but the color of their imagined mixture in the sensor field of vision, should constitute the so-called zone of physiologically optimum colors (13; 15).

5. The scale of the child does not coincide with that of adults. According to Wallon, a child attributes greater size to all things, constantly comparing himself with everything. He is interested in very big objects and, to a greater extent, in very small objects (3; 171-172 and 2; 221-222).

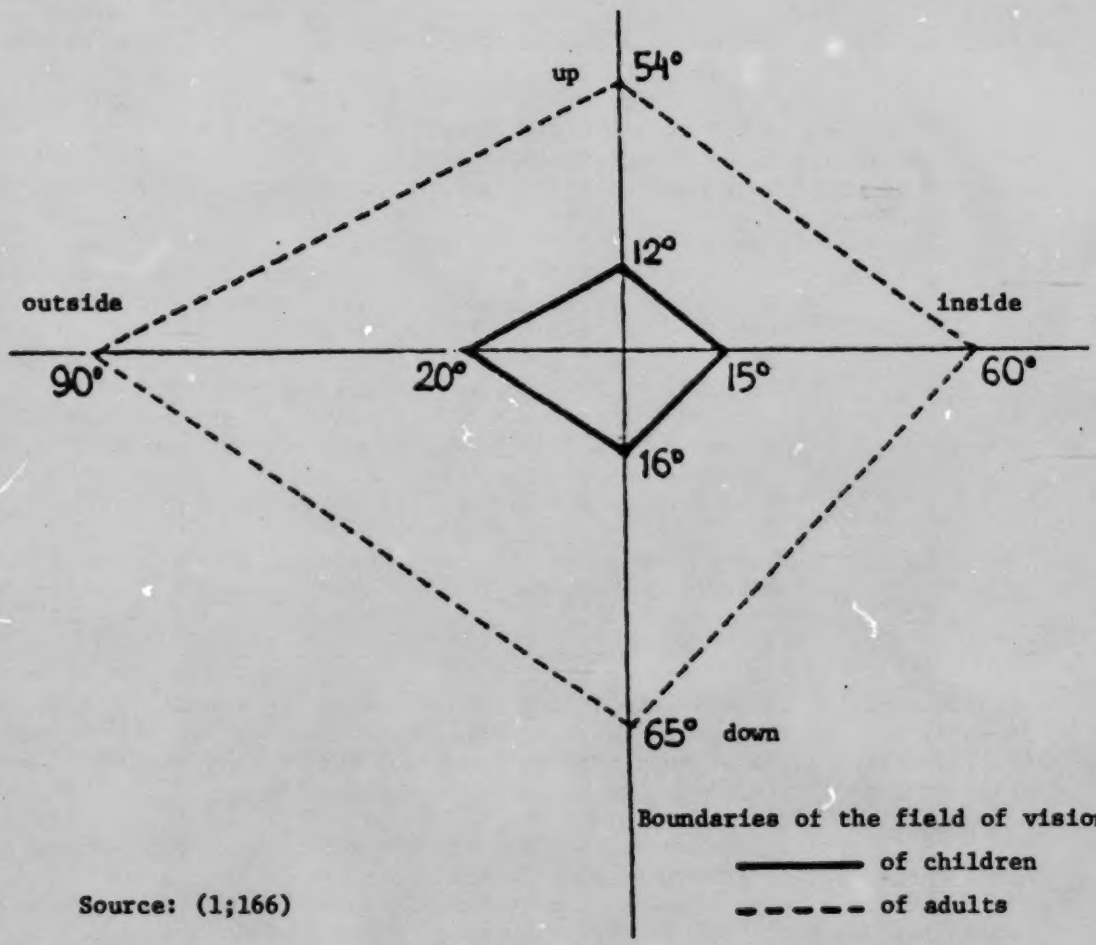
6. The field of vision in children is considerably smaller than that of adults - it is, for instance, 10 times less in six-year old children (See Figure 1). In consequence, the pattern of floors and fabrics, and the proportional division of objects to be used by preschool children should be, as a rule, as small as possible. Children also have lesser keenness of sight. Beginning from the age of four, keenness of sight increases more than two times during the next three years, reaching the adults' norm by seven years (1; 206).

7. Proportions should be contrasting and precisely defined. The children's eye for linear distance is 5-7 times less accurate than that of adults (1; 242); therefore, the child cannot perceive subtle differences.

8. Variability and mobility of the environment are very important. Children like changes very much. Transformable

FIGURE 1

Scheme of the Average Field of Vision
in Children from 6,0 to 6,4 Years Old, and in Adults



Source: (1;166)

built-in furniture and movable partitions create a feeling of novelty and give a flow of new impressions. Beginning from the age of four, children are actively engaged in construction play. Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus school of design, wrote, "We must encourage children in kindergartens to re-make their environment during creative games..." (24; 8). Furniture and equipment for children's premises have great significance in this regard.

d) Interpretation by Architectural Means

Some consequences resulting from these and other general principles have been applied in recommendations for the design of creche-kindergartens in the Soviet Union (7).

An important principle in ensuring good buildings for children, especially for the younger ones, is the creation of a sound visual link with the natural environment, particularly in urban settlements. This is necessary for two reasons.

1. For normal eye development, children need to observe objects both at short and long distances, providing opportunities for both convergence and divergence of their eye muscles. When groups or parts of buildings are arranged in parallel fashion, with small spaces between them, they do not provide an "infinite" point of vision, especially on the ground floor (See Figure 2). One should also take into account the fact that children's field of vision is less than that of adults (See Figure 1).

2. The second reason is the importance of the presence of the natural environment in the interiors of premises for children.

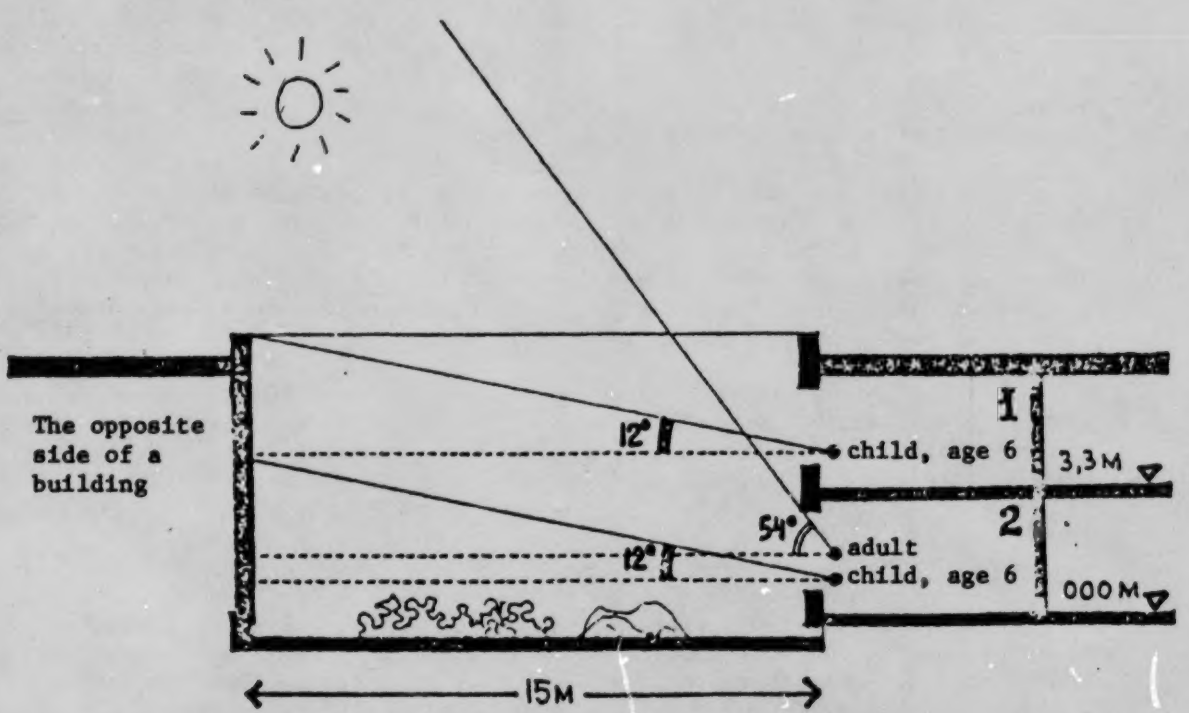
One of the decisive, frequently proclaimed features of modern architecture is its interaction with nature. Nature - sunset, clouds, rain, flowers, birds - represents for the child (as for man in general) a cognitive, functional factor more than an emotional factor, and as such is used by pedagogues in the education process.

Tiheeva, one of the founders of Soviet preschool pedagogy, gives the following appraisal of this problem: "Nature in all its variety is for the child a most natural and powerful environment ... its boundless diversity is not dangerous in the pedagogical sense." (20; 3-4)

This requirement is best met by cluster units in preschool institutions with corner and opposite glazing, often with window openings at different heights, with views of landscapes and of the unobstructed side of the horizon. These recommendations are also appropriate for younger schoolchildren.

FIGURE 2

Field of Vision in Children and Adults



The windows oriented to the non-obstructed side of the horizon should be visible at points 1 and 2

The interiors of some premises are elements of general structure constituting a single whole, since they are interconnected not only by functional but also by emotional dependence perceived through time. In creche-kindergartens, mobility is directed mainly outward, in the form of constant and stable links with the site, because the education programme envisages not less than two outings, sometimes including outdoor games, daily. In schools, basic mobility is inside the building, that is, circulation takes place among different parts of it.

The optimum spatial link between the environment and creche-kindergartens is as follows: indoor premises for a certain age group - awning - playground for this age group - landscape (site). Such a solution, in addition to providing functional convenience, allows a gradual transition from the indoor closed space to open space through semi-open space. E. Cornell called the phenomenon of entry "from-to", "the drama of architecture" (23; 6).

Many recent standard designs for creche-kindergartens, in the elaboration of which the author took part, provide for an organic link of the building structure with the site structure, locating awnings and playgrounds near the building and making use of some of the above principles.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Soviet law defines social and technical policy in the field of planning, design and construction of facilities, including those for children and teenagers. Planned state organization of research and development of standardized plans for the more widespread buildings provide opportunity for large scale adoption of scientific and technical achievements in all areas.

We have every reason to consider the methods accepted in the USSR to be reliable instruments for the design, regulation and control of the urban environment. Planning and managing urban space in the interest of children would be impossible without the participation of architects, engineers and builders, scientists, designers and organizers. These experts are necessary, though this list is not exhaustive.

The methods described here are effective, not independently, but in the general political and socioeconomic context of the USSR where, according to Romain Rolland, children are the only privileged class. Concern for children has its material expression in the state in the form of capital investments and operating costs for networks of institutions for the care of mothers and children. These expenses are legislatively confirmed by the Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and Union Republics. It is also clear that constitutional state ownership of land completely excludes the excesses which could adversely affect children and teenagers.

The complex problems of modern life have led to much interest in interdisciplinary research. Such research is a prerequisite for, but not a guarantee of, achieving solutions. More practical applications of research findings are needed. No research has as yet defined the optimum urban environment for children. Appropriate goals can nonetheless be isolated. Some are:

1. Reducing the number and danger of children's diseases; reducing death in childhood;
2. Prolonging the life span;
3. Improving general education and vocational training in the population; improving educational quality;
4. Enhancing individual physical, cultural and intellectual development.

There is a strong connection between our country's achievements in social and economic development and the intensive creation and reorganization of our cities, the mass construction of different types of children's institutions, and the care we provide for younger generations.

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LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACES IN THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Human settlement conferences, regional authorities and environmental psychologists have paid much attention to the issue of the livability of the physical environment. The importance of planning for the play needs of children in human settlements is receiving more attention worldwide, as children's ability to play is understood to be intrinsically tied to the livability of the environment. This paper will discuss the role of legislation and guidelines in influencing the planning and development of children's play spaces in the residential environment.

All children grow up within human settlements developed by adults for adults. Children are, therefore, victims of circumstances introduced to the physical environment that are selected by others and that they are rarely capable of modifying. As a result, they grow up and develop within the framework of human settlements which are not children's environments. For example, a child in a suburban house lives in a particular area with certain defined conditions; in contrast, the urban child is faced with a physical environment with a totally different set of conditions. The physical environment of human settlements and the activities facilitated through the environment provide the framework common to children's development.

The importance of the physical environment to the development of children is difficult to establish. Economic, social and educational circumstances are indisputably more significant in determining the growth and development of children. Nevertheless, as children are the greatest users of the outdoors and, therefore, are particularly vulnerable to the conditions of the physical environment, its quality does affect their overall behavior patterns.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Throughout history, children from all social and economic backgrounds have demonstrated the need for play as a major factor contributing to total development. The degree to which children's play has been provided for or restricted in human settlements is a reflection of society's expectations and perceptions of the importance of play. It is no longer a matter of

dispute; educators, psychologists, parents and many planners now recognize that play makes a vital contribution to the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of children.

The physical environment varies for children living in urban, suburban or rural settings. The issue of which milieu is best able to provide a child with a positive introduction to life can be debated, with numerous variables favoring one over the other. The choice of where to live is rarely one in which children have any say. While country living may afford children the opportunity to interact with nature, experience living things, and move about freely manipulating the environment, that context is restricted to an increasingly small percentage of contemporary children. The benefit of the physical environment provided in the country is clearly recognized, yet the social conditions created by the long distances from peers detracts from its idyllic quality. The components of the physical environment found in rural settings are nonetheless very conducive to play. Many people have advocated that all children, including urbanites, should have access to the variety of landscaping commonly found in the country; however, the provision of light, shade, sand, open space and grass does not of itself provide high quality play environments.

PLANNING FOR CHILDREN

Physical planning for children in a residential environment has almost always come to mean the planning of playgrounds. Playground planning is certainly a critical component, but we should not assume that children play only on established playgrounds with swings, slides, climbing structures and sand. Children play everywhere throughout the residential community. Planning for children's play must recognize this phenomenon and accept the fact that tidy playgrounds meet the needs of adults, but hardly respond to the needs of children. The provision of adequate open or recreation space for adults and children is rare. Adults, however, can make their needs understood; children cannot.

Developing legislation and guidelines for play spaces and for play opportunities in the residential environment has become critical as the demand for land and redevelopment of urban areas creates greater conflicts in the battle of allocating space and facilities for children. Legislation is needed at the national, regional and municipal levels which states clearly the legal rights of children within the residential domain. These rights of childhood are affected when standards are developed for space allocation. Standards are not to be confused with excellence under any circumstances, for as a regulatory tool they are designed primarily to establish minimally acceptable criteria. In fact, standards can do little more than require that spaces must be provided for a variety of play activities.

The transformation of space into a functional play area in which children can use a variety of loose materials - blocks, boards, hammers, saws and garden tools - as well as play with animals, presents other problems. In fact, a radical change in the consideration and priority given to children in society must occur. Such changes can be generated through the development and enforcement of guidelines emanating from housing ministries, social

service agencies, and recreational and educational institutions. The focus of social recreational guidelines must be on children's needs in order to compensate for past gross neglect in planning for them. Such a focus does not preclude the assumption that new or redeveloped residential environments should have a broad range of social, recreational and educational facilities to accommodate the needs of all age groups.

Many studies do not make a compelling case for the argument that the site plan has an important influence on individual behavior or collective social action. It is nonetheless true that resident satisfaction is tied to the residents' feelings about how the environment meets their needs. Consequently, it is only right and proper for open spaces to be provided. They must, however, be sited, landscaped and managed in such a way as to be fully usable as play and recreation areas.

Urbanization is quickly eroding the natural environment areas where past generations of children sought fun, freedom and adventure. The critical loss of space for play opportunities for children living in high-density environments heightens demands for legislation which focuses on the child's right to play. Although urbanization creates great demands for appropriate legislation for play spaces, legislation should not be exclusively geared to high-density urban settlements. The rights of children in all housing conditions are equal, and legislation should be developed to ensure adequate planning to facilitate play for children and families in various housing situations. Basic legislation is needed to protect the rights of children, even though the degree to which this legislation is needed varies throughout the world.

SOME INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

Legislation reflects the attitudes and priorities of society towards the nature and importance of children. The fact that some nations are more prepared to articulate their attitudes towards children and to state their belief in the value of play than others contributes to the diversity of approach found when a comparison study of legislation from Sweden, Denmark and Canada was conducted.

a) Sweden

The Swedish Norms for Building ("Svenska Byggenorm") enacted in 1975 and implemented in 1976, state that children must have equal play opportunities regardless of the density of the residential milieu. In fact, in areas of multi-family housing, the builder is required to provide a variety of spaces for children to play in, including spaces for young children close to dwellings. In single-family detached housing, municipal authorities and the builder may establish a contract which requires the homeowners to form a cooperative association to manage and maintain a communal play area for young children. In addition to these play spaces close to the houses, there are requirements for municipally-built and operated park playgrounds ("park lekplatser") which are not governed by the above-mentioned regulation. These general notes reflect in part some of the attention given to planning for children's play in Sweden.

b) Denmark

The essential components of the legislation concerning play and leisure areas in Denmark are identified in the 1977 copy of the Building Norms and Regulations ("Bygningsreglement"). These regulations apply to all of Denmark with the exception of the Faerø Islands and Greenland.

The requirements for children's play spaces are clearly itemized within the regulation governing open space planning for residential developments. The criteria state that when a project is planned for more than eight families, a portion of the open space must be developed as play space for children. This also applies to existing developments where possible. Space is allocated on the basis of 20 m^2 per unit. Adequate play spaces for both preschoolers and older children close to their homes, as well as more elaborate community facilities are now legally mandatory (See Table 1). The planning and development of these play areas must include plantings, landscape variety, equipment and fencing; accessibility, traffic movement and climatic variables must be taken into consideration.

The Danish community is very much in favor of the legislation, which has been in effect since 1972. In my opinion, we in Canada should use the Danish legislation as a benchmark for comparing standards developed for play spaces in a country with much more land for development. Is it presumptuous to think that the greater availability of land per capita will necessarily increase the land available for children's play?

c) Canada

In Canada, 55% of all new housing since 1961 has been financed through the National Housing Act (NHA), which is administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC: formerly Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, a federal crown corporation). The NHA standard relating to the provision of children's play spaces in residential developments is applicable only to new housing financed through the NHA; however, the NHA standards often serve as the model for municipal or provincial authorities in developing standards either similar to or more stringent than CMHC's. The current NHA criteria for the provision of children's play spaces are stated in the Site Planning Criteria published by CMHC:

> In comprehensively planned developments of over 20 family units (two bedrooms or more) appropriately located, designed and landscaped play spaces shall be provided for preschool and school age children. A minimum of 2.5m^2 per bedroom (excluding master bedroom) shall be provided as part of the minimum amenity area.

The effect of this standard is to provide 5m^2 per unit for play spaces for preschool and school age children in developments consisting of three bedroom units. Table 2 compares the effect of the national legislation for children's play spaces in Canada and Denmark when applied to a variety of developments.

TABLE 1

OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR PLAY OPPORTUNITIES IN DENMARK

Space allocation for children's play opportunities based on requirements A and B.

A. for 8 units or more - $20m^2$/unit
B. for 40 units or more - $35m^2$/unit

1. Total space for children's play = $35m^2$ x (no. of units)
   Play space for preschoolers = $10m^2$ x (no. of units)
   Play space for mixed ages = $10m^2$ x (no. of units)
   Community play space = $15m^2$ x (no. of units)

2. For every 30 units, not less than $200m^2$ must be provided for play spaces for preschoolers.

3. For every 60 units, not less than $600m^2$ must be provided for play opportunities for children of mixed ages.

4. For every 120 units, not less than $1200m^2$ must be provided for a community play area.

5. A 120-unit development must have:

   a) Four play spaces for preschoolers, each not less than $200m^2$ in size

   b) Two play spaces for children of mixed ages, each not less than $600m^2$ in size

   c) One community play area, at least $1200m^2$ in size

6. The total open space specifically provided for children's play and leisure in a 120-unit development is $3200m^2$.

   a) $4 \times 200m^2 = 800m^2$

   b) $2 \times 600m^2 = 1200m^2$

   c) $1 \times 1200m^2 = 1200m^2$

TABLE 2

	DENMARK		CANADA	
	Calculations based on: 1. $20m^2$/unit for developments with fewer than 40 units 2. $35m^2$/unit for developments with 40 units or more		Calculations based on developments of three-bedroom units: $2.5m^2$/bedroom (excluding master bedroom) $2.5m^2 \times 2 = 5m^2$	
NO. OF UNITS	TOTAL SPACE	ALLOCATION OF SPACE	TOTAL SPACE	ALLOCATION OF SPACE
20	$400m^2$	A. $200m^2$ B. $200m^2$ C. N/A	$100m^2$	A. $40m^2$ B. $60m^2$ C. N/A
40	$1400m^2$	A. $400m^2$ B. $400m^2$ C. $600m^2$	$200m^2$	A. $80m^2$ B. $120m^2$ C. N/A
120	$4200m^2$	A. $1200m^2$ B. $1200m^2$ C. $1800m^2$	$600m^2$	A. $240m^2$ B. $360m^2$ C. N/A
240	$8400m^2$	A. $2400m^2$ B. $2400m^2$ C. $1800m^2$	$1200m^2$	A. $480m^2$ B. $720m^2$ C. N/A
	A. Preschoolers B. Mixed Ages C. Community		A. Preschoolers B. Grade School C. No equivalent available	

The CMHC guideline Play Spaces for Preschoolers recommends that of the $2.5m^2$/bedroom:

$1m^2$/bedroom should be designated for A and

$1.5m^2$/bedroom should be designated for B

(i.e., $2m^2$/3-bedroom unit for A and $3m^2$/3-bedroom unit for B)

The NHA standards administered by CMHC do not provide criteria governing community play spaces. Requirements for such areas in Canada are specified by municipalities or provinces. It should be noted, however, that the requirements for "minimum amenity areas" in the NHA Site Planning Criteria are sufficient to require play spaces for preschoolers, school age children, and community play areas to be designated and developed within the residential setting.

Specific information concerning the organization, design, construction, landscaping and size of equipment in specific play spaces can be provided through guidelines. In Canada, this approach has been adopted to help developers, planners and the general public better understand detailed issues of design, organization and landscaping of play spaces. CMHC has recently published one such guideline, Play Spaces for Preschoolers (1978), with a subsequent guideline Play Opportunities for Grade School Children (1979). These guidelines will assist the housing industry in Canada to implement National Housing Act standards concerning play spaces for children.

CONCLUSION

Legislation governing play spaces can provide details on size, location and accessibility as demonstrated by the Danish regulations, or provide general information on space requirements, as Canadian regulations currently do.

Legislation and guidelines for children's play spaces in Sweden, Denmark and Canada, while far from ideal, are a step towards national legislation designed to protect the child's right to play. The Danes have had more exposure to such legislation than their counterparts, and many play leaders and teachers in Denmark advise on improving the quality of the design, organization and construction of play spaces for children in the residential environment. As human settlements increase in density, urbanization encroaches upon natural havens for all citizens. Fundamental to the protection and preservation of future generations is the development of reasonable child-oriented legislation and guidelines at the national, regional and municipal levels. This will ensure the provision of sufficient space, sited, designed, organized and landscaped to respond to the play needs of future generations.

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PLANNING FOR CHILDREN IN FINNISH CITIES

by Camilla Rosengren

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Urbanization in Finland was for a long time much slower than in the other northern European countries. There still are many peaceful small towns of mainly wooden houses. In such settlements, some thirty or forty years ago, children could watch adults at work, move freely, and find exciting places to play, even if there was little or nothing done especially for them. Nowadays, life has changed, even in these areas - people must travel to their jobs, the courtyards are crowded with cars, and the traffic makes every place dangerous for small children.

We now have problems in making even small-scale old parts of cities good places for a child to live and grow. Much more difficult, of course, are the problems in the high-rise areas, which grew so rapidly during the sixties and early seventies. Architecturally good housing has been built throughout this century, but there were no planning regulations and norms to meet and tackle the increasing problems of vehicle traffic, dusty courtyards, and destruction of the natural environment, not to speak of the isolation and unbalanced social patterns which developed.

During the sixties, the feeling grew that something had to be done. The building laws then contained no definite regulations concerning a safe and stimulating environment for children, and a number of really hostile areas grew in cities all over the country. Planners, municipalities and welfare organizations reacted by arranging all sorts of programmes for children, seminars for planners, school teachers and decision-makers, and even some experiments with adventure playgrounds. All this was, however, too incidental, and the only result was a boom in the market for all kinds of readymade equipment.

At the beginning of this decade, several relevant committee reports were published. They concerned the comprehensive school (1970, 1971), daycare (1971), preschool children (1972), and recreation areas (1973). In 1974, the Ministry of the Interior published "Planning Instructions for Children's Playgrounds". These recommendations were based partly on recent Danish, Norwegian and Swedish reports as adjusted to Finnish conditions. The following different types of playgrounds and open space are included:

1. Plot playgrounds
2. Neighborhood parks
3. Main recreation areas

4. Open space surrounding official buildings

5. Specialized athletic facilities

Of these, the first three lend themselves to the development of general standards. The following have been defined:

1. Plot playgrounds: within an immediate radius of 50 meters from the main entrance to any dwelling, space should be allocated for small children to play.

2. Neighborhood parks: there should be a recreation area for every block; the distance to the neighborhood park in apartment areas should not be more than 150 meters.

3. Main recreation area: at a maximum of 500 meters from any housing area, there should be a larger unified park.

These guideline instructions are not legally binding; they are, however, usually followed in the planning of new areas.

In 1974, there were small but important additions to Finland's building legislation, concerning children's playgrounds on lots consisting of more than two dwellings. A play area of at least $10m^2$ for small children is now required. It should be sheltered from noise, dust and pollution. In consequence, it should not be near, for example, parking areas, traffic, garbage containers or areas set aside for cleaning household furnishings. The play area should be varied, with its natural setting taken into consideration; it should be sunny, but it must be possible to find shade too. In addition to the playing area for small children, there must be enough facilities for adults.

The new instructions and the new legislation are concerned mainly with physical planning and design; I think that this is not enough, but even these new requirements have proved important.

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COLLABORATING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO ASSESS THEIR LANDSCAPE VALUES: A CASE STUDY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION, CALIFORNIA

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I. CHILDHOOD USE OF THE URBANIZING LANDSCAPE

Two ten-year old children were asked to make drawings of all nearby "favorite places" to which they went after school, on weekends and during the summer.

One child finished in a few minutes. She had drawn a square with a triangle on top of it, representing her home, and a rectangular shape representing her school (Figure 1). An L-shaped line connected the two, which she said was the central Oakland school bus route. The whole drawing had been done with a single black marker.

The second child used all seven colored wax crayons provided. After 45 minutes, her drawing covered the sheet of 18" x 24" paper; it was profusely detailed with a mixture of words, shapes and textures. She asked if she could come back for another session the following day, and ended up with two sheets, showing her home in the hills overlooking rural Napa Valley, surrounded by a domain of woods, fields, and personal places stretching away on all sides (Figure 2). Several of the other participating rural children also produced multi-sheet images.

Do these images represent consistent statements about these children's relationships with the environment? Is the obvious difference between them a significant expression of differences in the quality of their lives? The inner city child seemed to almost completely lack any kind of imageable relationship with her environment. For the rural child, the image was comparatively overwhelming. The difference was far more striking than could possibly be explained by differences in graphic skill.

If environmental experience is an important aspect of healthy childhood development, then we seem to have extreme cases of both deprivation and enrichment. The converse thought also comes to mind: what are the

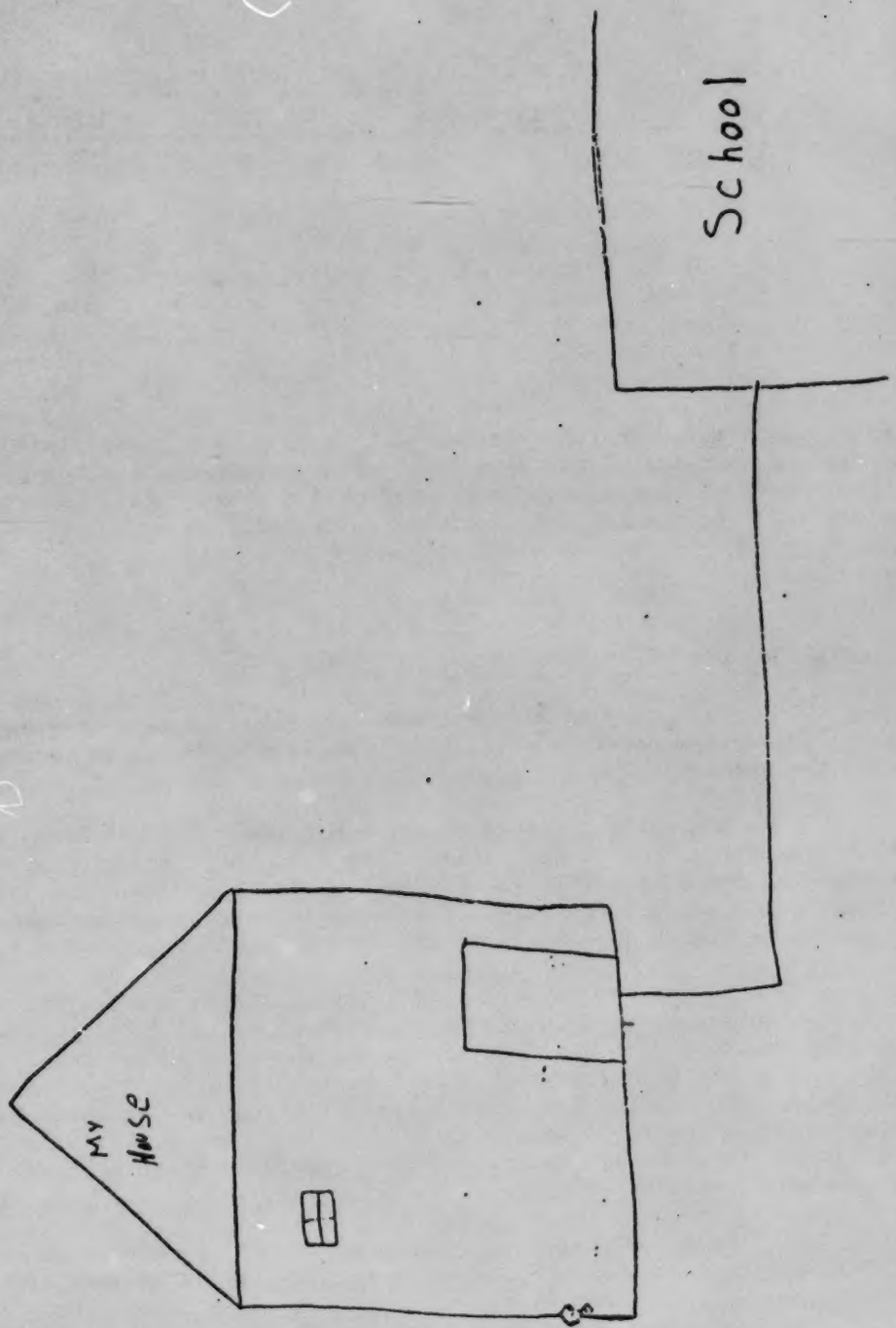

Figure 1. A Childhood Landscape in Oakland, California

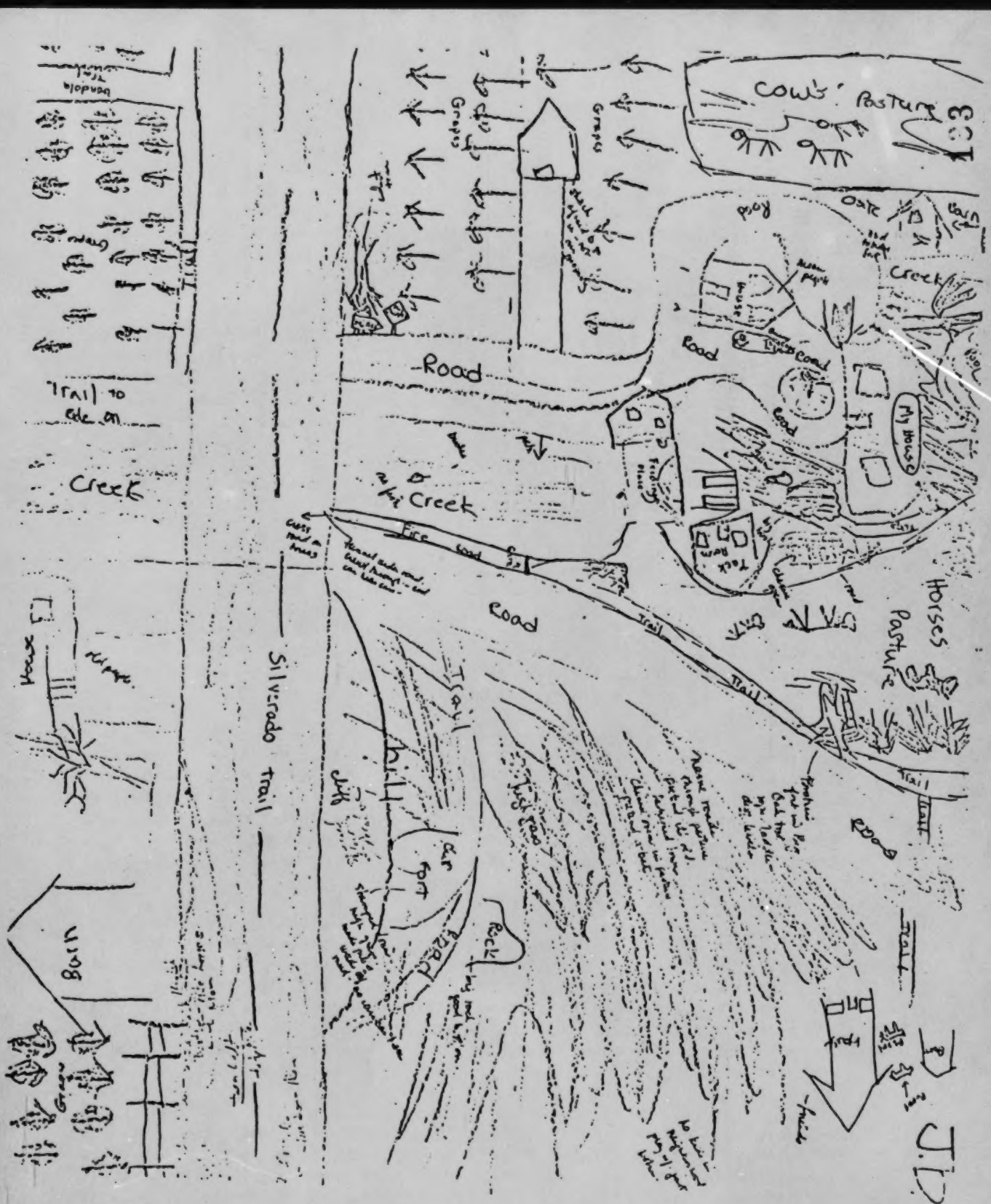

Figure 2. A Childhood Landscape in the Napa Valley, California

implications for the healthy development of the environment suggested by such extremes of formative experience? If we carry into adulthood what we pick up as children, it is hard to see how the Oakland child could grow up with the competence necessary for taking responsibility for herself and her surroundings. In contrast, the Napa Valley child looked as if she could do anything.

The opening illustrations were taken from the fieldwork phase of the Childhood Use of the Urbanizing Landscape (CUULS) Project, a field investigation of how 8-12-year old children, living under varying conditions of urbanization, interacted with their locally accessible environments. The study was conducted in the San Francisco Bay Region in 1974-76, along a "transect of urbanization", covering a range of contexts from rural to central city (Figure 3). Included were 256 children and a quarter of their families from six schools in five study areas: a rural valley (St. Helena); a suburban fringe (Concord and Walnut Creek); a moderate-density university town (Berkeley); a low-density inner city area (Oakland) and a high-density core city (San Francisco).

To investigate the impact of the local outdoor environment during middle childhood, a naturalistic policy-linked process of inquiry was adopted, emphasizing an ethical need to work directly with individuals in their own spaces. The aim was to achieve a detailed understanding of authentic children-environment relationships and to assess the factors stimulating and controlling their development in the places, pathways and territories actually used and valued by children.

How can we discover what parts of the environment provide the greatest extrinsic motivation - the greatest pull on the user? Environmental decision-makers need to know, in order to conserve or re-create landscapes of higher human significance. To answer the question, three principal methods of investigation were used: graphic simulation (drawings or maps of favorite places), personal interviews with children and parents, and child-led field trips around favorite places.

a) Realms of Value

The CUULS field investigation was principally concerned with assessing the "pull" of the landscape as a generic factor, along with the identification and evaluation of "controlling factors" that tended to inhibit or facilitate access to outdoor physiographic diversity. In an earlier paper regarding the recording and interpretation of people-environment data, three principal realms, or levels, of value were proposed as a guiding framework (Moore, 1978).

First, there is the "functional realm" of actual use: people use what they value, and vice versa. The problem, with children and other relatively powerless groups, is that their choice is not free because their opportunities of access to a diversity of experience are frequently constrained. In their everyday life, children must use whatever is available.

Figure 3. Study Transect Through the Urbanizing San Francisco Bay Area

Second, there is the conceived realm of values, of sensory perception and long-term memory. With a small degree of prompting, adults can produce powerful recollections of childhood experiences (see Cooper Marcus, 1978; and Childhood City Newsletter, December 1978). Many of these persistent images relate to everyday places around and inside the home, while others refer to occasionally-used or even one-time experiences, where the quality of place seems far more important than the amount of clocktime spent there. Conceived values represent the persistent memory of certain kinds of environmental experience. The substance of this paper deals principally with the CUULS findings within this realm, resulting when children were asked to draw and talk about places that were important to them.

Third, there are the values of biological interdependency. Some are obvious, such as life-support needs for air, food and water. Others are much less tangible. For instance, if sensory stimulation is essential for intellectual growth, which environments give the greatest payoff? How does playing in a natural stream compare to a downtown fountain? From the biosphere's point of view, experience of the natural stream may be more important; from a human cultural point of view, perhaps downtown is more important. A myriad of such questions needs to be faced in the quest for enhancing people-environment relations.

b) Enhancing People-Planet Relations

The purpose of the CUULS project was to contribute towards a basis for deliberate action by government and private organizations toward improving the quality of relationships between people and our urbanizing planet. Childhood is assumed to be the focus of this most profound interdependence. Over the course of biological history, many environments have been exploited to support human development. In the coming age, of virtually unlimited potential technological power, a desperate need is emerging for humans to redress the balance, to "support" their environments, to begin designing a future of mutual enhancement. If this immense task is to be implemented, greater numbers of people must grow up with increased experience and developed knowledge about the environmental circumstances of their lives.

II. METHODOLOGICAL FRAME

In seeking agreement on action, we must focus on distinctions between "good" and "poor" quality interrelationships, and avoid unnecessary dichotomies between general contexts such as "city" and "country". Each interrelationship is controlled by a multitude of factors ... Some enhance quality and others inhibit it. In certain types of contexts, we may conclude that enhancement is more likely, but it is never guaranteed. "Good" and "poor" relationships were found in all study sites.

Ultimately, something more than simple description is required to address the issue of comparative quality of local situations. What is the difference between the human response to a black-topped "playground", compared to a few yards of sheltered sidewalk or overgrown vacant lot? How

can a meaningful comparison be made between the human diversity of San Francisco and the natural systems diversity of St. Helena, and what kind of intermediate values do the suburbs provide?

The richness and range of the qualitative material is enormous and presents a challenging interpretive task. To avoid premature oversimplification and reduction of the data, it has been imperative to acknowledge the varied environmental, community, individual and biological factors that conspired to maintain locally distinct, authentic "people-environment cultures".

Methodologically, I have found it necessary to move up a "wedge" of understanding, beginning at the thin end of individual qualitative micro-situations and expanding to the broader collective, more quantitative whole system. The main body of the CUULS findings is at the "thin end", and consists of a collection of detailed accounts of particular places investigated in the company of individual children. In the course of the CUULS investigation, I was immensely impressed by the variability of individual situations, reflecting great cultural, social, personal and physical diversity. I intend to use these findings in a forthcoming book, in the hope of immersing the reader in a series of journeys or "stories" about children's favorite places, starting in the countryside and ending in the heart of the city (Moore, Childhood's Domain, in preparation). Following analytical convention, there was a great temptation to fragment the stories and use them to illustrate different aspects of interpretation, under headings abstracted from the quantitative material. To have done this, I believe, would have constituted an unethical obscuration of the integrity of the data.

The multi-level strategy which I adopted focused initially on the diverse relationships of each individual with his or her social and physical surroundings. Some children had access to a rich array of physical resources and spaces at many scales, allowing them to develop an empathetic, intimate relationship with their surroundings. At the other extreme, some children had virtually no contact with their neighborhood environments. Occasionally this seemed to reflect a personality trait of the individual. In general, however, parental fears (for example, of traffic), cultural tradition (for example, the strong domestic focus of the Asian community) and deprived environmental opportunities (for example, lack of diversity or access to resources), seemed to be more important.

I am presented with a dilemma of communication. The "stories" that could add so much qualitative life to the skeleton of the whole, are too bulky and impossible to transfer in a summary form. In this paper, they will be set aside in favor of an overview presented by the more quantitative results.

Fortunately, every reader holds a trump card for overcoming the communication barrier: personal memories of childhood domains or "environmental autobiographies" that perhaps represent more universal relationships. An issue of the Childhood City Newsletter (December 1978) suggests that the production of environmental autobiographies is not only an important tool in training professional designers to help them clarify the particularities of

their own personal environment values, but may well also become a therapeutic technique of general use in helping people understand who they are and where they have come from (see also Cooper Marcus, 1978).

The crux of the issue we are now facing is that opportunities for the development of high quality autobiographies of favorite places can no longer be taken for granted. Deliberate research, discussion and understanding are required, so that opportunities are not lost, but are enhanced in the urbanization process. In the West, they may be increasing in significance (in competition with television) as a replacement for disappearing traditional urban childhood social supports (at-home parents, extended families, extra-curricular school activities, for examples).

III. CUULS FINDINGS

a) Favorite Places

Table 1 shows a compilation of all the location elements of individual drawings made by all 265 children in the study. In effect, it represents a collective image of the Bay Area landscape according to 8-10-year olds. "Mention rate" is simply the number of times an element was drawn, divided by the number of children (265). In other words, it indicates the likelihood of a given element appearing in an "average drawing" (or child's mental image); or, numerically, it represents the user impact of the Bay Area landscape.

Immediately we can see that the list reflects the diversity encountered in the field. Only three of the elements have mention rates greater than .50 (likely to appear in 1 out of 2 drawings); "child's own house", "through streets" and "child's mention of self". Only a little over half the elements have a mention rate greater than .10 (appear in 1 in 10 drawings). The remaining elements appear in a very scattered fashion throughout a multiplicity of children's images.

The upper part of the list, with mention rates of .20 and above, can perhaps be fairly considered as representing a reasonably shared world - by at least one in five children. These first twenty elements deserve special attention, and could perhaps function as an initial check list for discussing local environmental needs. Notice I say "discussing", for the future must be kept open. While the list is suggestive and a useful guide, it must not be used prescriptively - merely projecting the status quo into the future is insufficient.

A more general statement is obviously required for strategic purposes. In Table 2, the seventy-two elements are used to formulate sixteen broader categories. The importance of homesites and their immediate surroundings comes over strongly, together with people and vegetation (each having a mention rate greater than 1.0, that is, likely to be a part of every child's image). Pathways follow close behind, with a mention rate of .92. Perhaps the most significant finding is that natural system elements account for over a quarter of all mentions, and together have a mention rate greater than three.

TABLE 1

MENTION RATES OF PLACE ELEMENTS IN RANK ORDER[1]

PLACE ELEMENTS	NUMBER OF MENTIONS	MENTION RATE
1. Child's own house	210	.79
2. Through streets	209	.79
3. Child's mention of self	174	.66
4. Friends/relatives' home	127	.48
5. Child's school	105	.40
6. Child's friend(s)	94	.35
7. Store(s)	93	.35
8. Community park	90	.34
9. Single trees	82	.31
10. Lawns	82	.31
11. Fences	70	.26
12. Playground/schoolyard/equipment	70	.26
13. Traffic	69	.26
14. Community buildings	69	.26
15. Dwellings/apartments	61	.23
16. Neighbors/sitter's house	57	.22
17. Yard for play/stoop	57	.22
18. Dirt/sand/gravel/tanbark	56	.21
19. Creek/stream	55	.21
20. Trails/shortcuts/paths/alley	53	.20
21. Sidewalks	51	.19
22. Child's parents	51	.19
23. Swimming pool	47	.18
24. Sports field	47	.18
25. Hill/mountains	46	.17
26. Dead-ends/driveways	45	.17
27. Child's siblings	44	.17
28. Building interiors	43	.16
29. Sports playing court	41	.15
30. Topography	38	.14
31. Shrubs	38	.14
32. Buses/BART/stops[2]	37	.14
33. Tall grass/weeds/leaves	37	.14
34. Climbing trees	36	.14
35. Tree clusters	32	.12
36. Child's relatives/other adults	31	.12
37. Cats/dogs	30	.11
38. Climatic conditions	29	.11
39. Agricultural land	27	.10
40. Forts/clubhouses	25	.09
41. Water play	25	.09
42. Fruiting trees/vines	25	.09
43. Rocks	25	.09

TABLE 1 (continued)

PLACE ELEMENTS	NUMBER OF MENTIONS	MENTION RATE
44. Regional park/fairground/campground	24	.09
45. Vacant lot/land under development	24	.09
46. Railroad	23	.09
47. Parking lot	23	.09
48. Misc. buildings/structures for playing	23	.09
49. Shopping/commercial strip	22	.08
50. Pond/lake/reservoir/ocean	22	.08
51. Gas station	19	.07
52. Fish/aquatic life	19	.07
53. Bridges/tunnels	18	.07
54. Dirt roads	18	.07
55. Flowers	18	.07
56. Treehouse	18	.07
57. Garden	16	.06
58. Skating rink/bowling alley	16	.06
59. Church	16	.06
60. Wild animals	16	.06
61. Shopping centre/plaza	15	.06
62. Horses	14	.05
63. Abandoned buildings/structures	14	.05
64. Farm animals	13	.05
65. Wild birds/insects	13	.05
66. Movie theatre/drive-in	10	.04
67. Tree-swing	10	.04
68. Other domestic animals	8	.03
69. Secret hiding places	7	.03
70. Asphalt/concrete	6	.02
71. Woodland	5	.02
72. Culvert or stream	2	.01

[1] From CUULS: US graphic simulations, N-265

[2] Bay Area Rapid Transit

TABLE 2

AGGREGATED MENTION RATES FOR 16 CLASSES OF PLACE ELEMENT[1]

PLACE-ELEMENT CLASS	MENTION RATE	%
Homesites	1.99	17
People	1.49	12
N-Vegetation[2]	1.05	9
Pathways[3]	.92	8
Community facilities	.91	8
Open space (official and ad hoc)	.87	7
Through streets	.78	7
N-Natural ground surfaces	.62	5
Sports facilities	.57	4
N-Macro-landscape elements[4]	.55	5
Commercial buildings	.49	4
N-Animals	.43	4
N-Aquatic features	.39	3
Fences	.26	2
Traffic	.26	2
Child-built places[5]	.24	2
Interiors	.16	1
TOTAL	11.98	100

[1] From CUULS: US graphic simulations, N-265

[2] N, natural system elements - 3.04 or 25.4% of total

[3] Includes all pathway elements except "through streets" because they have a more ambiguous function.

[4] Includes large-scale or ubiquitous elements, such as hills, mountains, climatic conditions and topography.

[5] Includes forts, club-houses, miscellaneous structures used for play, secret hiding places.

If open space (which principally consists of natural elements) is included, the percentage is well over thirty. Here we have clear evidence to support feelings already engendered by many individual stories, that experience of natural objects and phenomena should be considered a crucial part of childhood's domain.

The low ranking of animals, aquatic features and child-built places stands in marked contrast to the power evoked by these elements in many of the "stories". It surely reflects lack of access to such resources, rather than lack of motivation. There is a clear need to educate a fuller awareness of the importance of these elements, to conserve them, or provide opportunities for their creation.

An important note in passing relates to the merely modest rank of sports facilities. Does this indicate an under-supply of resources or is it an accurate index of user-impact? (They were certainly not highlighted in most of the stories.) Their moderate rank does not reflect the typically high emphasis placed on sports by some parents and many municipalities. The issue demands further clarification. If the ranking is a true reflection of inherent demand, then clearly, resource allocation priorities should be shifted away from sports, toward under-supplied, high-impact elements such as animals, aquatic features and facilities for child-built places.

Finally, the bottom rank of interiors is noteworthy. It surely gives a clear indication of the childhood importance of outdoor environments.

Children's place preferences were also explored in two further interview questions, asking them to list favorite places for after-school and weekend use. Table 3 gives a summary of results, listing percentages of total mentions. Again we find homesites (houses and yards) in top rank, accounting for over one third of the items in the replies. Almost another third of the replies covered places located in the immediate neighborhood, of which parks and institutional grounds were by far the most important. The low significance of schoolyards and playgrounds is noteworthy. Considering that they are especially provided for children, they do not seem to exert a great deal of pull. On the other hand, Table 3 lists a sizeable collection of other types of favorite places that demand attention from a policy standpoint.

b) Furthest Journey

The next interview question asked for the furthest distance travelled without an adult (Table 4). The importance of walking and the wealth of experience available in the pedestrian domain are clearly indicated (72% of all mentions). Suddenly, commercial centres take on new significance, not as play environments so much as territorial extremities or spatial goals. Individual landscape features clearly also function as important landmarks, as geographic horizons expand. Parks add considerable significance in this respect as well. Table 4 also suggests that bicycles are an important means for children to expand their territories (traffic dangers notwithstanding).

TABLE 3

FAVORITE PLACES TO GO AFTER SCHOOL* AND WEEKENDS**

	No. of mentions	%
Homesites (child's own, friends, babysitter's and relatives)	214	35
Close to home places (e.g. street/court/parking lot)	24	4
Schoolyard/Playground	53	9
Parks/Institutional grounds	103	17
Urban recreation facilities (gymnasium, little league, sports fields)	29	5
swimming pools	19	3
Commercial places (stores, shopping centres)	27	5
Movies	13	2
Extended landscape (e.g. fields/vineyards/up in hills)	29	5
Special places/Features (e.g. caves/ditch/tree house/ house building site)	34	6
Aquatic places (creeks, ponds, rivers and streams)	17	3
Distant places (weekend trips)	29	5
Non-specific	5	1
Total mentions:	595	100%

* 256 interviews
** 173 interviews
} results combined

TABLE 4

FARTHEST PLACE TRAVELLED TO WITHOUT AN ADULT

	No. of mentions	%
WALKED TO:		
Commercial centre (e.g. store/shopping centre)	43	33
Landscape features (e.g. beach/creek)	34	26
Park	25	19
Social landmarks (e.g. friend's house/movie theatre)	18	14
School	6	4
Vicinity of home	6	4
Total walking mentions:	132	100%
Proportion of all mentions:		72%
BIKED TO:	26	15
BUSSED TO: (e.g. San Francisco/Sacramento)	15	8
TOOK BART* TO: (e.g. Fremont/Oakland)	6	3
TOOK PLANE TO: (Seattle, Los Angeles/Wisconsin/Iowa)	4	2
	183	100%

(Don't know/nowhere/always with mother: 7)

* Bay Area Rapid Transit

c) Forbidden Places

Children were asked about places they were not allowed to go (Table 5). Thirty percent of the replies indicated few constraints and considerable freedoms, provided certain standing procedures (like checking beforehand) were followed. Conversely, some children (6% of replies) were subject to severe parental constraints that surely limited their experience, and possibly their future capacity to deal with their surroundings.

Traffic-related places were most often prohibited, followed by commercial centres, adult situations such as certain movie theatres, parks, and aquatic and other natural environments. The not-insignificant prohibition of parks and aquatic features is an issue deserving further discussion, since both are also highly motivating elements, as suggested by other findings of the study.

d) Environmental Fears

Table 6 lists the reasons why certain places were prohibited. The principal sources of "environmental fear" are clearly indicated under the headings of social, physical, traffic and inadequate spatial competence. These findings should be of interest to a wide range of people responsible directly or indirectly for children's welfare. A number of issues are raised; for instance, whether certain fears are reality-based, or "irrational". In the latter case, there is a need for parent education to, at the very least, point out the negative consequences of unwarranted territorial controls.

e) Evaluations of the Outdoors

1. Likes: The last three questions, asking children to evaluate and recommend changes to their outdoor domains, are of particular interest. The replies represent a conclusive case for the involvement of children in the planning and design of their surroundings. If adults sometimes have a hard time imagining why the outdoors is so important to children, Table 7 should provide the answer. The most dominant reason given, by far, was to experience the natural environment: vegetation, animal life and weather, and climatic and other sensory qualities. Plants, trees and fresh air were the most frequently mentioned specific items.

The very low number of mentions relating to contact with the earth is cause for comment. Surely the low score does not reflect the true level of motivation. Two possibilities come to mind. First, children have grown out of dirt play by the time they reach the ages of 8-12. For much younger children it is certainly a primary form of play (sand boxes included). Introduction to the earth may be a very early requirement - symbolically it seems so. However, this argument is strongly contradicted by several of the individual field trips where "earth-play" was a big feature.

Second, it is very possible that Bay Area dirt is difficult to play with. In many places, the natural "soil" consists of very heavy adobe clay which becomes baked rock-hard in the summer sun, and in the winter is cold and muddy. Its play quality only improves with cultivation. The playing

TABLE 5

ARE THERE ANY PLACES THAT YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GO?

	No. of mentions	%
Few constraints	46	30
Severe constraints	9	6
Streets, highways and traffic-related	24	15
Commercial centres	19	12
Adult situation	18	11
Parks	15	9
Aquatic places	14	9
Natural environments (other than aquatic) (e.g. hills/fields)	13	8
Total mentions:	158	100%

(No response/don't know: 21)

TABLE 6

REASONS WHY PLACES ARE PROHIBITED

	No. of mentions	%
Social Fears		
Fear of attack/assault/kidnap	9	
Threats from other children	7	
Non-specific social apprehension (e.g., "lot of strange people around here")	7	
	23	27
Physical Danger		
Fear of water/getting wet/drowning	9	
Other physical dangers	7	
Snakes/dogs/bugs/animals	6	
	22	25
Traffic Danger	19	22
Inadequate Mental Map		
(e.g., "It's too far ... might get lost")	15	17
Miscellaneous	8	9
Total mentions:	87	100%

(Don't know: 4)

TABLE 7

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE OUTDOORS?

	No. of mentions	%
Vegetation and animals	60	19
Earth		
Digging/mudpies/dirt pile	3	1
Weather/Climate/Sensory Qualities	61	20
Non-specific		
(e.g., Just like being outside)	5	2
Specific Places		
(e.g., Hut, fort)	24	7
Man-made Objects		
Planes in the sky/passing cars	2	1
Indoor-Outdoor Contrast		
(e.g., Not hot, stuffy, noisy, like indoors)	22	7
Specific Activities		
(e.g., Play ball/swim)	44	14
Access and Choice		
(e.g., Lots of places to go, to play)	28	9
Play	24	8
Social Relationships		
(e.g., Friends to play with)	26	8
Don't Like Being Outside	13	4
Total mentions:	312	100%

child then runs the risk of "trespassing" on an adult domain. If children were to participate in the solution of this issue, it should be possible to set aside areas in local open spaces where dirt play could occur. There is also a need to educate parents to see how parts of the private spaces around the home could be set aside for children's use. And of course, beyond any of these ideas, perhaps, is the great need to "de-asphalt" school yards. Once this is done, plants and animals, and the associated sensory qualities so strongly appreciated by the young, could become part of daily existence, especially in heavily built-up areas.

Some children were attracted outdoors by specific places such as "the swamp" or "park" which, according to Table 7 (and earlier ones) have strong natural resource connotations. Man-made objects in and of themselves were rarely mentioned.

Table 7 also lists the contrast of "outdoors" to "indoors" to a significant degree: to escape the "stuffy, noisy" indoors and find the freshness and quietness outside. Many more children than perhaps we imagine are sensitive to noise - especially if it is not their own - and need peaceful places to which to escape. As suggested by the magnitude of the Table 7 category of Specific Activities, outdoors is also a necessary location for a variety of space-consuming pursuits such as ball games.

2. Dislikes About the Outdoors: When asked what they did not like about the outdoors (Table 8), the negative side of weather, climate and animal life was strongly expressed. Rain and climatic extremes were noted in particular, pointing to the importance of paying attention to micro-climate considerations in the urban planning and design of places for young people. Animal life was not considered universally good either. Children need protection, by means of education and by direct means, from such things as rattlesnakes, mosquitos and ticks - just like everyone else. Clearly, dogs can be bothersome and in some cases real threats, even to older children. This issue deserves wider appreciation and action.

It is interesting to see that vegetation received very few negative responses. Clearly it is a more benign resource and does not "bite" back except for poison oak (which is a real bother) and "prickly" plants. Vegetation, in all its magnificent variety, comes over as an outstandingly appreciated element. Its presence can therefore be taken as a key indicator of childhood environment quality.

Responses relating to pollution and traffic accounted for a quarter of all the replies. Air pollution, referred to by different terms, such as "stinky buses" and "gas smell from cars", received the strongest emphasis. This type of sensitivity may reflect current attention to macro-environment quality politically and in the media. Also, it is the major aspect of environmental education that has filtered down into the schools; the interesting thing is that children still have their own way of looking at and expressing feelings about phenomena such as pollution. Educators could do well to pay more attention to children's local perceptions and possible connections into the larger frame of reference, rather than adopt a preconceived approach, telling pupils how messed up the world is, at a level beyond

TABLE 8

WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT THE OUTDOORS?

	No. of mentions	%
Weather/Climate		
(e.g., Rain/cold/sun/hot)	31	15
Animal Life		
(e.g., Mosquitos/ticks/noisy chickens)	24	11
Dogs and Cats		
(e.g., Dogs chasing me/dog's mess)	12	6
Vegetation		
(e.g., Prickly plants/poison oak)	6	3
Physical Hurts		
(e.g., Fall and get hurt)	6	3
Pollution		
(e.g., Dirty air/noise/litter)	29	14
Traffic	20	10
Other Children		
(e.g., Mean, fighting)	17	8
Adults		
(e.g., People with guns/drunks/too many people)	15	7
Miscellaneous	17	8
No Dislikes	32	15
Number of mentions:	209	100%

their experience. Local phenomena are real. Children's collaborative assessment would perhaps be a more realistic and lasting way to approach the broader issues.

Traffic received only a tenth of the negative replies, which is not very sizeable compared to the real magnitude of its impact - causing death and serious injury and limiting mobility (Table 6). It is perhaps the clearest case of children taking the world for granted. Traffic is accepted as an unchangeable part of their surroundings, like houses and trees. It therefore suggests a pressing environmental education topic, because of its pervasive influence on children's lives. As a topic it has good skill acquisition potential (observation, math, descriptive language). Clear political and economic issues are involved, because just about every aspect of contemporary life enters into a discussion of automotive life-styles.

The other area of negative feeling expressed about the outdoors was social - equally about "other kids" and adults. The combined magnitude is small, however (15% of replies), compared to the negative physical environment factors. Oakland children were the source of more negative social responses than those in other places. And (together with San Franciscan children), they had more to say about pollution and traffic. Hence we get a sense of the double bind of ghetto environments. Physical deprivation requires a correspondingly increased social dependency; but the social environment is also deprived to such a degree that it is violent. Children are unable to find sufficient life support, therefore, either in the physical or social domains. To address this issue, through the direct involvement of young people themselves, is an outstanding task of education - a task that has at least a remote possibility of helping education become relevant to ghetto conditions.

The miscellaneous category in Table 8 includes expressions of children's negative feelings about their surroundings through specific examples such as "bumps in the street so you can't use skateboards" or "church moved next door and tore friend's house out". A checklist like this, put together by any group of children, would be a good place to begin an educational process.

3. Additions and Changes Desired to the Outdoors: The last point above is greatly expanded by the final question: "What would you like to see added or changed to the outdoors?" (Table 9). It is hard to look at the results without being convinced that young people will have a lot to say about the quality of their surroundings, if given the chance (only 7% of the replies suggested that the status quo was acceptable).

First we might note that children's homes are not the focus of attention when it comes to changing things, even though home - rich or poor - is the centre of most children's functional lives. The most obvious reason for this lack of focus is that the home is assumed to be under the control of parents (or landlord), to a degree that the idea of child-initiated change is inconceivable. In terms of 8-12-year olds really acting on the world, the broader environment is where real opportunities (and friends to help) are to be found.

TABLE 9

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ADDED OR CHANGED TO THE OUTDOORS?

	No. of mentions	%
Status Quo (e.g., It's fine)	22	7
Home Setting (e.g., Have my own room)	12	4
Neighborhood Setting (e.g., Add swings and slides)	56	19
Traffic and Safety	17	6
Streets and Sidewalks (e.g., Take out bumps in certain streets and make them for skate boards only)	11	4
Vegetation (e.g., Trees to climb on, fruiting bushes)	34	11
Animals (e.g., Watch and feed ducks)	15	5
Horses and Farmyard Animals (e.g., Get own horse)	13	4
Pools	25	8
Forts and Clubhouses	9	3
Pollution Controls (e.g., Clear away trash/take away smog)	63	21
Social Controls (e.g., More kids on our block/stop crime and murder)	20	7
Move Away (e.g., Live in country)	4	1
Number of mentions:	302	100%

(Don't know: 5)

Thus, it is at general neighborhood scale that most of the physical changes apply. They consist of a great variety of specific desires. Most of them are quite modest: "add swings", "add benches", "sand". Some are more substantial: "add creek", "take some houses away and put in a park" - with a few proxemic changes that are beyond the realm of possibility: "ski resort outside", "move Indian Rock nearer".

Several types of local change were noted to such an extent that they became separate categories; of these, the addition of vegetation, in general, and especially trees and flowers, was the most sizeable. Traffic and safety, streets and sidewalks, animals, horses and farmyard animals, were also significant topics of concern. Swimming pools, as expected, also received some attention. Perhaps supply is closer to demand in California?

The low mention of forts and clubhouses - children's architecture - is perhaps surprising, though consistent with other findings (see, for example, Table 2). Although it may be considered an apotheosis of childhood involvement with the environment, few children actually engage in the construction of their own buildings. The lack of competence, materials and appropriate locations simply means that it is a rare event. A question to ask is whether it occurred more frequently in the past, and whether it should be more deliberately encouraged now. Certainly, the success of European-style adventure playgrounds, where construction by children is the main activity, provides important supportive evidence. Many of the stories contained evocative clubhouse or fort episodes, although rarely concerning actual construction. In other words, most children's buildings are "found" places, which although they may be "worked on" over long periods of time, are seldom constructed from scratch. Thus, individual tree-houses may be handed on from one child generation to the next, in succeeding cycles of embellishment and decay, but total abandonment and change in location are rare.

Pollution control (here defined as "too much of anything in the wrong place") has a level of importance consistent with its high rank as a negative aspect in Table 8. About half the replies in this category refer broadly to cleaning up dirt, trash, garbage, litter. The other half focus on specifics: "take out walnut trees", "take away biting dogs", "make a car that does not use gas".

Interestingly, the proportion of replies referring to social controls is about half what it was in Table 8. Perhaps this reflects an attitude of "you can't change people", or overall, it perhaps expresses children's dominant concern for the physical, rather than social conditions of their surroundings.

IV. THE FUTURE: MANAGEMENT AS EDUCATION

The investigation, in part reported here, has convinced me that local open space management, in all its aspects, should become part of the broader public educational system. The CUULS project shows that young people can have much to say about their surroundings, if given the opportunity. The educational potential is a great deal more than simply providing "input".

The Indoor-Outdoor Contrast category, plus the categories of Access and Choice, Play, and Social Relationships, together represent the generalized attraction of the outdoors as a domain of freedom and choice of experience. Outdoors is where children can run their own lives, "do things", "look at people", "meet other kids", "feel free", "play" ... in other words interact with the world in a necessary and special fashion.

The outdoors "calls" children strongly to itself, to discover life. Motivation is the strong selling argument for education. When outdoors and under the right conditions, children can become totally absorbed in pursuing self-initiated plans and activities for hours at a time. This seems in marked contrast to the typical classroom problem of getting some children interested in "learning" for more than a few moments, and then only as a result of intimidation, rewards and punishment, or sheer trickery.

Learning based on real life experience is not a new idea. It was the central theme of John Dewey, whose commonsense philosophy has been sadly ignored in recent years, even though the environmental crisis has made it so much more pressing. The real crisis is not of course "environmental"; it is educational, and not just concerning young children either, but all humanity, of all ages. And it is an urban crisis too, in the sense that it is the inner city where an experiential education base is most needed. Yet at present, it seems least likely to develop as a strategy for dealing with cultures of deprivation.

There should be no such thing as "environmental education". All education takes place in an environment of one kind or another. To call one branch "environmental" implies that the rest of education is not. The relevant question is to look at what type of environment a particular education takes place in and observe the kind of relationships the participants have with their setting: consciously or unconsciously; positively or negatively.

Another serious problem is the extent to which "the environment" is considered to be something "out there", usually outside the city, exclusively "green" and only available on the weekends, for rich or educated folks. This anti-urban bias seems especially strong in California, or it may be characteristic of all recent New World settlements. Whatever its roots, it has the serious consequence of reinforcing oversimplified rural-urban dichotomies and beliefs, such as that all building is bad and that natural systems can only survive outside the city.

More and more the term "environmental" has become synonymous with monolithic macro-concepts such as "land", "air" and "water", and measures of quality that are technical and unrelated to the intimate environmental experiences of everyday life. Ironically, this has been the area of strongest classroom impact - teaching preconceptions to young children that the world is polluted, in a hopeless state, rather than allowing them to discover for themselves the world as it is.

Another unfortunate consequence of the macro-problem approach to environmental education is that, as with the forerunner movements of

nature study and conservation education, it has remained a separate content-oriented "subject" or frill on the edge of an already over-burdened, centrally-prescribed curriculum.

Perhaps "experiential education" is a more worthwhile and accurate term, based on a belief that learning can only be motivated by real experience such as provided by children's local play settings where connections between micro-experience and macro-knowledge can be initiated. In a diverse, accessible local environment, an appreciation of the larger system can be acquired through small-scale interaction. In this sense, a small neighborhood creek is much better than a rarely-visited majestic river. At one level, the two are experientially equivalent, but the close-to-home version has the great advantage of self-initiated access. The effect of traffic on residential livability can be studied in an immediately meaningful way on the local streets. It has great applied mathematics potential, and the results can be readily transposed intuitively to the larger urban system.

Such connections between particular and general realities introduce the idea of environmental competence. By itself, the term "competence" is commonly used in education in reference to skills with words and numbers. But little thought is given to modes of acquisition, or applications in real world situations. If it was, then it seems possible that not only would literacy levels and number skills improve, but more competent people would result, better able to understand themselves and more prepared to take responsibility for the situations in which they find themselves.

This broader notion of competence suggests the need to guide the deliberate design of the world ethically through the application of skills acquired experientially. Traditional modes of moral education - by subjugation under adult authority - are no longer appropriate to a rapidly-changing world. An alternative education process based on children's experience, assessment, and decision-making about their personal worlds could have great power. Not only would it introduce an essential base of sound urban environmental values, but at the same time it would meet the conventional "academic" aims of education far more effectively, by using children's self-motivated experiences as the springboard for acquiring knowledge and skills. "Childhood" and "place" values must be incorporated educationally into the development of a more substantial earth-bound culture, driven by a "politic of experience" as a motivating force.

But all experience is not equal in "the world as it is", especially at the local level for children. Hence there must be a parallel concern by those responsible for urban development and redevelopment, to begin to understand the environmental values that young people seek in the use of their surroundings - values that need to be conserved or designed-in as new development takes place, and deliberately recreated in existing urban areas. We have a long way to go before the majority of young people achieve everyday access to adequately diversified urban surroundings.

It goes without saying that children themselves must be involved in the decision-making process at all levels: in direct participation on specific design and planning issues, as well as in an ongoing educational

enterprise. One is the complement of the other. The reorientation of the urban environment toward childhood needs must be conducted as a co-creative task between children and appropriate institutions. Several "process tools" for planning and design work with children have been developed, but their application in solid educational processes, in and out of school, is only just beginning. To be effective, co-working relations between educational institutions, urban governments, non-government organizations, local communities and their children must be forged, so that work can begin on the deliberate design of new futures for the people-planet.

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CHILDREN AS MANAGERS OF URBAN SPACE: FROM UNIQUE PRODUCTS TO REPRODUCIBLE PROCESS

by

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I. INTRODUCTION

The child, urban space, and the management processes designed to relate the two have been debated at length over a period of some ten years. An unusually high degree of consensus among concerned adults has been achieved with respect to key criteria for the potentially successful integration of the child in the city. Not surprisingly, however, a number of adult hypotheses are not necessarily congruent with the child's perception of the city (Jacobs and Derevensky, 1976).

Research related to the urban field as well as that focusing on children suggests that a broad range of management criteria has not been integrated into the urban decision-making process. The resultant lag between unofficial perceptions of viable actions towards the integration of the child in the city, and official gestures on behalf of the child, is aggravated by the ease with which official products for the child can be reproduced, such as the neighborhood playground. This contrasts with the apparent uniqueness of successful prototypical alternatives to the officially sanctioned childhood city that have not generally been replicated.

It is argued that the tension between an urban management strategy based on recognizable and reproducible products as opposed to a focus on management processes that may lead to variable, but adapted, products can be achieved through the introduction of two critical elements: an open and exposed programming process and a continuous institutional context that will provide the experience and training necessary to the evolving integration of the childhood community, as well as the community of the child, in the management of urban space.

II. PROGRAMME CRITERIA DERIVED FROM CURRENT RESEARCH

A two-part research project, conducted in Montreal, was designed to:

1. explore urban and suburban children's perceptions of their own environment; and

2. determine whether adults could be trained to perceive an urban child's environment in much the same manner that the child does.

Findings of the study may be utilized as programmatic elements for the design and management of the integration of the child in the city.

a) Subjects

The subjects included 132 children from elementary and secondary urban and suburban schools in and around the Montreal area. The children ranged in age from five years to seventeen years with a mean age of ten years and three months. The urban group consisted of 33 males and 44 females, and the suburban group consisted of 26 males and 29 females.

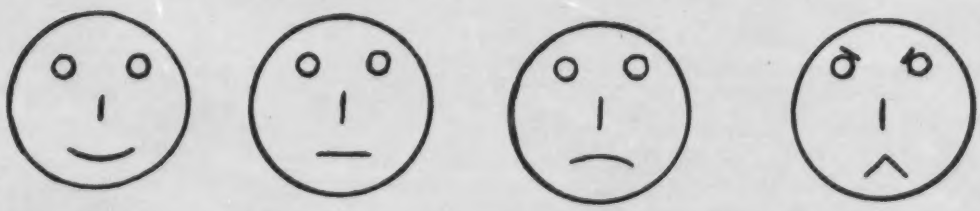
The adults selected for this study were enrolled in courses at Concordia University in Montreal. They were classified into two distinct units: those with limited training in the inner city environment (a university lecture course with no fieldwork components, N=23), and those with extensive training (a specific course on the urban child with field research and a placement component, N=23).

b) Instruments

A detailed questionnaire was developed to examine the child's perception of his or her own environment. The items in the questionnaire sought to determine children's interests, their reactions to the environment and the depth of their perceptions of home, neighborhood, family and peer group recreation; in general, the child's lifestyle.

Included in this questionnaire were seven questions designed to elicit from the children a nonverbal response about feelings concerning the environment. The children were required to respond to each question by circling the picture of the face which most closely represented their feelings (Figure 1). Administration time was approximately one hour.

FIGURE 1. FACES PRESENTED FOR NONVERBAL EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS



c) Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to each child individually and his or her answers were responded to with a nod of acceptance. At the end of the semester, this same questionnaire was administered to the two groups of adults enrolled in the two distinctly different types of courses. They were required to respond to the questions as they thought an urban child might. This concluded the formal collection of data.

d) Results

The results of the study which are related to the children's perceptions of outdoor environments may be grouped into four premises (1-4) and the results of the experiment with adults led us to a single conclusion (5) that preconceived products inhibit change.

1. The integration of the child in the city requires community accommodation. When a community places emphasis upon economic criteria associated with design rather than upon the needs of the child, the ability of the child to integrate into the mainstream of activity is stifled. As one example, when the suburban school boards of greater Montreal opted for the construction of comprehensive schools, the suburban children were forced into a bussing situation where all children from outlying areas were bussed to the one designated focal site. The results of our study indicate that 44% of the suburban children are bussed to school as opposed to 17% of the urban children (Table 1). In our opinion, the resultant spatial discontinuity inhibits the integration of the child in the community and violates the child's need for access, proximity and control of the environment.

TABLE 1. PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO - HOW DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL?

RESPONSES	URBAN	SUBURBAN
Bicycle	0	3.6
Walk	66.2	34.5
Carpool	2.6	12.7
School bus	16.9	43.6
City bus	9.1	5.5

2. Play depends upon access, proximity and control. A number of articles in the literature of children and recreation (Gold, 1972; Ward, 1978; Pollowy, 1977), indicate that easy access and proximity to the home are vital elements in the ability of a recreation facility to support play.

The data in this study indicate that in response to the question of where they play, 67% of the suburban and 45% of the urban children indicated that they used facilities close to home (backyard, road, street, driveways and lanes) as primary play spaces. These unofficial play areas permit the child to exert some degree of control over the environment and allow the child the freedom to determine the type of play in which he or she will engage. Privacy and solitude are possible in these spaces, and will be discussed in the following section.

The results of this study reveal that only 10% of the suburban and 20% of the urban children rated the park as their primary play area. They opted for dynamic rather than static play possibilities in which they could control and manipulate the environment.

3. Perceived opportunities for change are essential to involvement. Programmes and policies which deny children as well as adults the responsibility of participating in the decision-making process create a powerless and uncommitted condition. When the children in our study were asked what they would like to have which was currently unavailable in their community, the highest percentage of responses from both urban and suburban groups was "I don't know" (See Table 2). Perhaps the customary exclusion of children from the decision-making process has left them with the sense that they cannot effect change and that therefore there is no point in considering the issue. The consensus in the literature indicates that we have robbed children of a sense of control over their environment and left them with the perception that they lack the power to influence official policy, programmes and design action.

TABLE 2. PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO -
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

RESPONSES	URBAN	SUBURBAN
More parks	5.2	7.3
Recreation centres	11.7	1.8
Don't know	16.9	18.2
Swimming pool	11.7	12.7
Arena	7.8	2.4

4. Mobility is essential to growth and development. The urban environment is rich in its complexity of form and function and offers the child a diversity of opportunities for exploration. One must make use of the total urban environment in order to benefit from its resources.

Confinement to specific areas creates a discontinuous sense of the larger world. The substantial immigrant population in Montreal's urban core provides an example. A question concerning modes of travel indicated that 80% of the urban children had travelled by plane back to their "homelands" whereas only 64% of these children had travelled on the Metro (subway) within the confines of the city.

5. Preconceived products inhibit change. Table 3 indicates the response of the adults and the urban children to the question of how the child feels about where he or she lives. The data indicate that the responses of the adults who received intensive training most closely approached those of the urban child. Table 4 indicates the responses of the three groups of subjects to the question of how the children feel about recreational opportunities in the city.

TABLE 3. PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEM 1 - WHERE THE CHILD LIVES

RESPONSES				
No training	17.4	65.2	13.0	4.3
Training	65.0	30.0	4.3	0
Urban Child	66.0	23.0	3.0	6.5

TABLE 4. PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEM 7 - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

RESPONSES				
No training	34.4	26.1	26.8	8.7
Training	30.4	26.1	34.8	8.7
Urban Child	57.1	19.5	13.0	10.4

It may be seen that neither the trained nor the untrained adults were able to approximate the child's perceptions of recreational facilities. The same discrepancy of results occurred in all questions about recreation, parks and playgrounds.

Adults seem to have preconceived notions about the goodness and necessity of parks and playgrounds; they appear to have difficulty seeing recreation from the child's point of view. The key to childhood satisfaction in recreation lies with the child who must be given the opportunity to design for himself or herself in accordance with his or her perceived needs. We, as adults, may be necessary assistants in advocating on the child's behalf, but it is not appropriate for us to "design play spaces simply with the child in mind".

III. FROM UNIQUE PRODUCTS TO REPRODUCIBLE PROCESSES

a) Programming for Change

The mechanism proposed in support of processes that might reinforce the theoretical consensus outlined in this paper is referred to as the programming process. This process obviates the institutional and conceptual constraints of the flow of information from the client (the child and the community) to the procurer of the desired facility (government and its consultants).

The programming process is designed to accommodate a wide variety of interdisciplinary theory and in particular behavioral, spatial and social elements that, taken in isolation, can only lead to mutated or incomplete statements of conditions necessary to the successful understanding of a design problem.

Research reported in this paper can successfully be translated into performance and design criteria for the integration of the child in the city. In particular, if the success of a play environment depends on access, proximity, control and spatial continuity relative to the child's position in the city, then we have only to articulate the relative measures of these criteria in order to provide a set of instructions to the procurer of a desired facility. Further, the articulation of such criteria provide the user with a viable set of instruments with which to evaluate a range of proposals formulated by the institutional sponsor and the supporting consultants.

The programming process is equally viable in an advocacy context where the proposed facility and the processes by which it is to be acquired are formulated by and on behalf of the client group. Similarly, the theoretical consensus dealing with the functions of play, the necessary facilities in support of play, and the necessity of independence, responsibility and a measure of control over the environment of play can be articulated as instructions to the designer while simultaneously serving as a means of evaluating a wide range of proposals that might emerge.

The essence of the programming approach to problem solving is, however, the simultaneous provision of design instructions across social,

behavioral and spatial conditions and the concurrent provision of instruments for the evaluation of products, facilities and processes derived from the design process.

Acquisition of programming skills in the articulation of instructions and the evaluation of responses to these instructions requires a continuing institutional context. Insofar as children are considered full members of the community, they must be provided the same or similar opportunities as adults to manipulate their environment at appropriate scales of intervention. If, in their growth and evolution towards adulthood, they are to sharpen the skills that are required to suppress the static images inherent to preconceived solutions, children must learn, through practice, to exert some control over the processes through which new facilities are achieved.

b) Learning to Control Processes for Environmental Change

The development of the child's ability to articulate perceived environmental needs and to bring about change requires an understanding of the theory and the experience of practical application through experimentation. The most viable facility for instituting this programme is the school system: it could integrate courses on environmental change into the curriculum at all levels of learning. We are proposing that this type of programme be instituted throughout the elementary and secondary levels of schooling, with adjustments made in accordance with the child's level of comprehension and abilities.

This programme could be initiated at the primary level, where children would be given the responsibility for setting up their own learning environment and would be encouraged to restructure the arrangements which they find to be uncomfortable or no longer viable. This freedom to alter the environment would result in the development of a sense of control over physical surroundings and the expectation that this freedom of manipulation would be possible at all times. Experiments with the environment lead to a deeper understanding of cause and effect and heighten children's awareness of the relationship between themselves and the space which they inhabit.

At the mid-elementary school level, children might be given responsibility for the design of the school playground on a yearly and seasonal basis. The annual and seasonal nature of the design would be stressed, for with each new wave of school children needs, interests and perceptions differ, and play facilities must reflect the dynamic interests of the population. Perhaps a designer could be hired on a retainer basis to help the children effect the changes which they want (Clay, 1972).

In secondary schools, a curriculum reflecting the children's level of cognitive ability would include theoretical aspects of basic design concepts related to how, where, when and why designs take certain forms (form as related to function). The applied section of the course would involve experiments outdoors in the vast empty playing fields of the school.

One important aspect of this curriculum is the advocacy component whereby children learn about:

a) their legal rights;

b) how to protect these rights;

c) how to utilize all aspects of the bureaucratic system designed for the public interest;

d) how to short-circuit all of this and go directly to the media when the utilization of the formal system fails;

e) the systems designed to insure conservation and preservation of facilities which are in the public interest.

Inclusion of this type of course in the school curriculum will set in motion a critical expectation on the part of children that they can exert control over their environment, through an understanding of the processes by which the environment as a whole is formed and reformed without prejudice to future inevitable change.

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THE "WHOLE CITY CATALOGUE" PROJECT: STUDENTS ASSESSING THEIR URBAN ENVIRONMENT

by Fred Hill and Martha Friendly

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Any concern for the health and overall well-being of Canadian urban children needs to acknowledge the importance of recent rapid changes in the urban physical environment of children. Change itself, of course, is not new, but the environments in which children now live are unprecedented. Even 25 years ago in Canada, there were, for example, no suburban high-rise apartments. The suburbs were largely populated by families with children in single family homes and the enclosed suburban shopping mall, so popular now as a teenage hangout, did not exist. Most of the urban fabric had, for better or worse, been inherited from the days of unregulated, helter-skelter land use development. Oddly enough, however, relatively little is known at present about how these and other recent changes in the urban physical environment have affected the lives of children, or, for that matter, about how differences in the environment from one neighborhood to another are reflected in both the general well-being of the children living there and how they spend their time. One need not be a staunch environmental determinist to maintain that whether a child lives in a bungalow or a high-rise, beside a swimming pool or a pinball parlor, with a bus stop at the front door or 15 minutes away, on a cul-de-sac or on a busy street, will have some significant effect on his or her life.

The Whole City Catalogue project undertaken by The Child in the City Programme is designed to document some of the effects of the urban physical environment on children's lives. In what kinds of environments are we raising children, and what do children think of them? How do children who live in areas with poor services and transportation spend their time - any differently from children with similar backgrounds in better serviced neighborhoods?

A method was developed to, first of all, attempt to document children's environments, to determine what children think about the areas they live in, and to gather data on the variety of ways in which children spend their time. Through the cooperation of the school boards in Metropolitan Toronto, we were able to involve two groups of high school students in assessing their urban environment. First, some 3,000 students in urban geography courses, mainly in grade 12, completed a two-week curriculum unit in which they collected material for the project. Each pair of students was assigned to an area of a few city blocks. They prepared an inventory of the area's services, facilities, environmental settings and opportunities relevant to children and teenagers. They included, for example, restaurants, certain

types of stores, pinball and pool halls, athletic facilities and clubs, community centres, places to take lessons, churches, schools, amusement and recreational facilities, places where children play, and hazards. The students recorded not only the existence of these facilities, services, programmes and so on, but their thoughts on how well they meet the needs of children; they also evaluated each neighborhood as a place for children to live, and made suggestions for improving each area to better meet the needs of children.

The kit of materials provided to each pair of students included a large-scale land use map for the area assigned to them. Each pair recorded on their map each item they had noted in their inventory. From all this information, and from supplementary lists, we had hoped to put together what we had planned to call The Whole City Catalogue. Such a catalogue would be a valuable community resource, and it was intended that the data would form the basis of various types of analyses and descriptions.

Although the project was extremely successful as an educational exercise, and although some of the information and observations are insightful and revealing, the data collected by these students has proven to be too erratic to form the basis for either a comprehensive Whole City Catalogue or systematic analyses of the distribution of resources for children. It would probably be possible to replicate this endeavor more successfully if it were to be done on a much smaller scale, with students and teachers of known abilities chosen to participate, and with more direct control by the researchers over the data gathering process. Because of the great variation in the quality of the information returned to us, we have found it necessary, in composing the catalogue, to use alternative sources of information wherever these exist as our major means, resorting to the students' inventories and maps as supportive material.

Undoubtedly, some facilities are more widespread than others, some more equitably distributed than others, some neighborhoods much better provided for than others. But what does this mean for children? Does it mean that children living in an area with few recreation facilities spend time at the shopping centre and get into trouble, or do they travel elsewhere and do the same things as other children who have recreation facilities nearby? If they do not happen to live near a park or swimming pool, do they end up not going to parks or swimming pools very often?

To answer such questions, we are using the results of the second part of the Whole City Catalogue project, a lengthy questionnaire which approximately 10,000 grade 9 students have completed, supplying us with information about how they use the facilities and opportunities provided in their neighborhoods and elsewhere. We hope to be able to demonstrate the effect of variations in neighborhood characteristics, specifically the availability of facilities and opportunities, on how adolescents spend their time.

We recognize, of course, that many factors other than the physical environment have an impact on what children do. Social class and ethnic background, for example, may be more important determinants of whether a teenager plays tennis or goes bowling than his or her access to tennis courts and bowling alleys. Our questionnaire therefore includes a wide range of family background data. Similarly, we have included questions on dwelling types,

neighborhood perception, knowledge of the city's resources and opportunities, residential history, and fears in the neighborhood and elsewhere in Toronto, in the belief that all these too are related to adolescents' activities.

As for the activities themselves, our questionnaire probes most of the out-of-school activities in which a grade 9 student is likely to engage. Unfortunately, because the questionnaire was administered through the schools, we were not able to include questions on drug or alcohol use, sexual practices, or law-breaking, although some students inevitably find ways of letting us know that these activities are apparently a significant part of their lives. The list of activities covered in the questionnaire is fairly comprehensive, however, including: doing homework, reading, watching television, doing volunteer work, spending time at parks and playgrounds, spending time on streets and sidewalks, in laneways and parking lots, going to public libraries, shopping and visiting commercial establishments, playing pinball and pool, eating in restaurants and fast food outlets, visiting discos, attending movies and dances, going to concerts, musical presentations, live stage productions, museums, exhibits, and art galleries, attending sports events as spectators, participating in sports, going to clubs, taking lessons, going to worship, visiting friends and relatives, working at part-time jobs, fulfilling responsibilities around the home, and taking vacations.

Most of these activities depend either upon publicly provided facilities or upon facilities provided by the private sector within the constraints and framework set by municipal and senior levels of government. For most of these activities, we will know how often the students do them, where, with whom, how they get there, and how much they like doing them. Our questionnaire also asked each student to identify what he or she liked best and disliked most about his or her neighborhood, and what was missing that would be desirable.

By analysing this data both geographically (that is, by neighborhood) and at the individual level, we will be able to sort out the various factors contributing to differences among neighborhoods and among individuals in how children spend their time. We see this information as a useful contribution to policy and planning decisions on the general level. More specifically, we believe that how a child spends his or her time is related to many youth-oriented problems; underachievement, alienation, drug and alcohol abuse, even physical and mental illness. The public and private sectors in turn respond to these problems and to what children do with their time, and in so doing alter the structure of opportunities provided in different neighborhoods - and so the process continues. Therefore, insofar as the environmental opportunities influence children's choice of activities, the more we know of these relationships, the further we are along the road to devising comprehensive solutions to these problems, and to adjusting environmental inequities to avoid what Kevin Lynch has called the "experiential starvation"[1] of children.

From this study, a series of recommendations will be forthcoming on how the living environments of children and youth can be improved to meet

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[1] Kevin Lynch, Growing up in Cities, M.I.T. Press and UNESCO, 1977, p. 24.

their needs better, recommendations which will be based on a demonstration of what the consequences of these environments are. The recommendations may range from the highly specific (for example, that the broken glass on a certain piece of vacant land where children play be removed) to the more general (for example, changes in legislation or regulations which would recognize the needs of children in urban planning).

This project has enabled several thousand adolescents to contribute to a study of their own urban living environments in a variety of ways: by providing the information necessary for us to document some of the consequences of building cities and suburbs the way we do, by making specific suggestions for changes and improvements, and by making their own opinions about their neighborhoods known to decision-makers through the distribution of our findings. In turn, the students involved in the mapping and inventory part of the project experienced what they overwhelmingly described as "one of the best projects (they) have done in school this year". While some of our original expectations about the validity of the students' inventory as a method of gathering reliable data were not met, this experiment in involving children in assessing their own environment will still provide what we hope will be a useful input into the planning and decision-making process - and from an underutilized source.

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URBAN OPEN SPACE FOR CHILDREN IN THE BANGKOK METROPOLIS

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent history, Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, has gradually changed from an agrarian settlement to a conventional modern city. Alterations in its functional and socioeconomic structure, especially after the second world war, have created a strong pull factor which induces rural migration into the city. This rural migration significantly contributes to Bangkok's 4.5% annual population increase, which exerts pressure for basic urban physical and social services, including housing. It appears that the city cannot cope with the demands for such services. The gravest consequence is urban sprawl, which causes many urban environmental problems, one of which is the lack of open space, the major focus of this paper.

In this paper I discuss the situation of the provision of open space in Bangkok, with emphasis on open space for children, and attempt to present an approach toward improvement. Hopefully, this paper will stimulate international discussion among experts which will lead to the development of more appropriate concepts and approaches regarding the solution of the problem of open space in Bangkok.

II. THE BANGKOK METROPOLIS

Before proceeding to the problem of urban open space, I will present some basic information about Bangkok.

a) Physical Characteristics

The Bangkok metropolis presently occupies a flat alluvial plain covering an area of about 1568.7 km^2. The area is only about 1.2 metres above mean sea level, thus presenting a difficult drainage problem. In the past, Bangkok was crisscrossed by many man-made canals, called klongs in Thai, built for irrigation and drainage purposes. As the city expanded, most of the klongs were filled to make roads. Unfortunately, the filled klongs were not replaced by efficient drainage systems. Consequently, most areas in the city are flooded for long periods of time after heavy rainfalls.

The subsoil is soft marine clay, which has a high water table. Therefore, construction in Bangkok needs pilings and a strong foundation. This makes any construction for urban improvement very expensive.

b) Population

According to the most recent census (1978), the population of Bangkok is 4.8 million, which accounts for 11% of the total population of Thailand. The actual population of Bangkok is likely to be higher than the census population, as a considerable number of rural migrants have, no doubt, not registered with the city. At present, Bangkok's population is growing at a rate of approximately 4.5%. Out of this total growth rate, 2.3% is due to natural growth and the remaining 2.2% is caused by rural migration. About 30% of the total population is less than 14 years of age. Most children are in middle and low income families. It has been estimated that on the average, there are two children in every family in Bangkok. The average family size in Bangkok is six people.

c) Urban Pattern

As far as the urban pattern is concerned, the Bangkok metropolis can be considered a multi-nuclear city. Administratively, the city is divided into 24 districts, each of which contains its own internal nuclei, consisting of row shop-houses and shopping centres. The population density and the degree of urbanization do vary from one district to another. The outer districts still retain characteristics of rural centres and their population density is as low, while the inner districts are fully urbanized and densely populated.

Due to the lack of land use planning and zoning regulation, various kinds of land use in each district are intermingled. This has significantly contributed to the severity of many existing urban problems, such as traffic congestion, environmental pollution, and lack of housing and open space. The situation in the fully urbanized areas has deteriorated to a stage that seems to have no remedy. The best the city administration can do is only to prevent new problems and check the existing problems. A mammoth investment will be needed to completely solve the existing urban problems in Bangkok.

III. URBAN SPACE

a) Present Supply

At present, only 0.09% of the total urban area is public open space used for recreational purposes. This figure represents an area of 1 km^2 for every 4,000,000 persons, which is very far from the standard of 1 km^2 for every 70,000 persons as planned by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). Public open space in Bangkok consists of a total area of 100 hectares which are distributed among five public parks, one zoo, a few mini-parks, and 23 playgrounds for children, all of which are provided by private land developers. It is, therefore, clear that there is a serious shortage of open space and that this problem will become steadily worse as the urban population increases.

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b) Present Demand

It is well recognized that demand for open space comes from both adults and children. However, this paper will focus on the problem of providing open space for children; their development is the basis for the development of the nation's human resources.

Bangkok's children can be divided into three main groups based on the income of their parents: children of low-income families, middle-income families and high-income families. Of the total of 1.4 million children in Bangkok, 0.6 million of them are in low-income families, and the remaining 0.8 million are in the middle-income and high-income groups. Naturally, the three groups of children need open space mainly for play. However, their demand patterns for open space are dictated entirely by their socioeconomic environment which, in turn, governs the time they have for play as well as their accessibility to open space.

Most children in low-income families live in marginal settlements. Between the ages of 6 and 14, they must attend school. There, they are provided with opportunities to play on school grounds during the morning and lunch break periods. After school, most of them must help their families by earning extra money to supplement the family income. Therefore, they do not have as much play time as the children of middle-income and high-income families. Whenever they have time for play, they usually go to the nearest and most easily accessible spots such as open space in monasteries, or sidewalks along the roads. Only a small number of them play in the public playgrounds provided by the BMA because of the limited distribution of these playgrounds.

Open space is more accessible to the children of middle-income and high-income families; they also have more time and more opportunities to use it. Their play areas are provided in their own and neighbors' houses, in the communal parks in their housing estates, and in some commercial facilities such as tennis courts, swimming pools and fair grounds. Most children from middle-income families have sufficient open space in their houses, while almost all children from low-income families must use open space outside of their houses, especially open terraces and lawns.

c) Future Outlook

It can be inferred from the foregoing discussion that the need for open space of children in low-income families should receive highest priority. Recognizing the problem, the BMA in its Bangkok Development Plan 1977-1981, has explicitly stressed its determination to provide more open space in the city. Specifications include:

1. Short-term plan

   a) To improve the quality of park and open space in 4 specific areas;
   b) To provide small parks or green corners in the denser areas of Bangkok;
   c) To provide a sports training centre for teens;

d) To assist private or public agencies in creating public green space in Bangkok;
e) To provide recreational facilities, such as music halls or small libraries.

2. Intermediate plan

To fully implement the development of the Chatuchak Park Project which is now under construction.

3. Long-term plan

To build four big parks around the city.

If the above-stated targets are met as planned, the open space situation in Bangkok should be much improved.

IV. THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF OPEN SPACE FOR CHILDREN

a) The Inputs

Based on the concept of industrial production, the system of producing open space for children in Bangkok can be delineated as in Figure 1, which shows that the production of open space needs four major inputs. Each input deserves careful consideration.

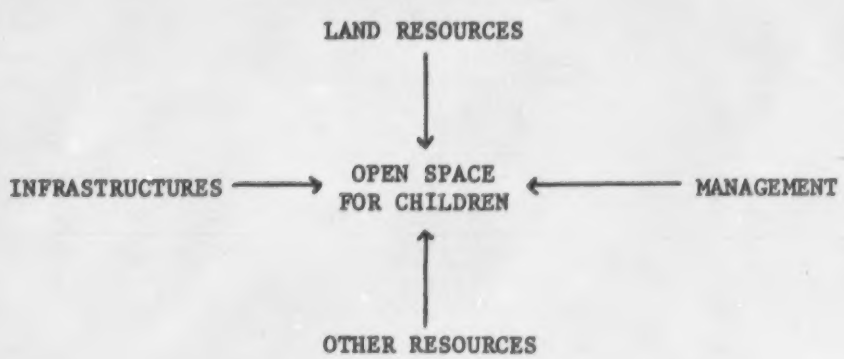

FIGURE 1: SYSTEM OF PRODUCING OPEN SPACE

1. Land Resources: Land in the urban area of Bangkok is very expensive. It costs at least US $300,000 per hectare. As the city expanded, no land was reserved for open space; in consequence, land has become the most scarce resource. The production cost of open space will be astronomically high if this resource must be purchased at market price. Therefore, land availability seems to be the most serious constraint in the production of open space in Bangkok.

2. Infrastructures: Once the land is acquired, it must be developed to meet minimum standards. The development requires site preparation, landfill and basic physical infrastructures such as access roads, walkways, electricity, water supply and drainage. These necessities will considerably increase the investment and, in some cases, may even cost more than the land.

3. Other Resources: In addition to the land, the production of open space also requires other resources, such as landscaping, and accessory structures, such as playground equipment.

4. Management: Management, including technical skills, plays a key role in the production of appropriate open space from the initiation of the project through implementation and operation.

Clearly, these four major inputs must be fully integrated, and their supply on a large scale must be the responsibility of the public sector, which in this case is the BMA. Therefore, it can be rightly assumed that the BMA must be the major producer of open space.

b) The Producers

Although the BMA is the major producer of open space in the Bangkok metropolis, there are, on a smaller scale, producers other than the BMA. In the public sector, various government agencies, monasteries, temples, universities and schools are all producers of open space to a varying degree. In the private sector, social organizations, private land developers and individuals also function as producers of open space. The need for their cooperation and integration under a common framework should be stressed. In this context, the BMA can act as coordinator and should give its technical assistance for the children's benefit. Figure 2 is a schematic representation of the sources and users of public open space in Bangkok.

c) Types of Products

In Bangkok, there are various types of products or open space which can be classified in four levels:

1. City open space: playgrounds in 5 public parks, the university campus, a zoo, and two private recreation centres.
2. District playgrounds: 23 playgrounds and youth centres around temples and schools.

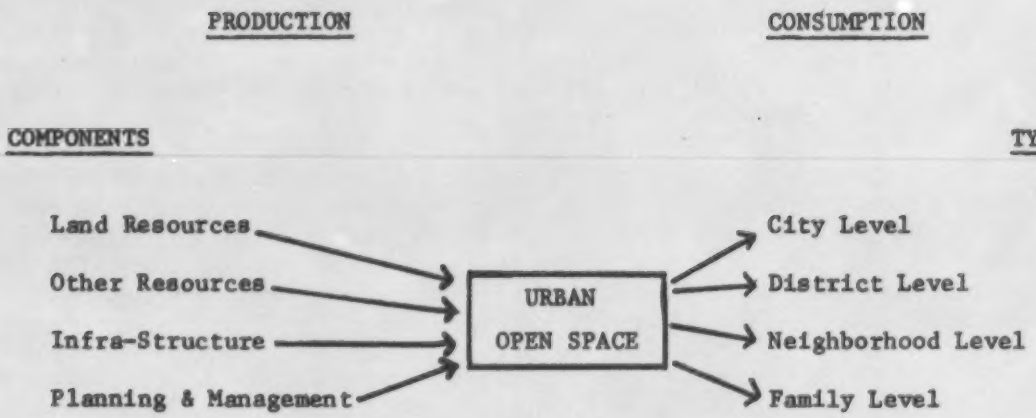

FIGURE 2: URBAN OPEN SPACE FOR CHILDREN IN BANGKOK

3. Neighborhood common area: communal centre with playground within low-income settlement.
4. Open space connected with private homes: in practice, private houses of high income or upper middle income families provide from 30-70% of the total land area for open space.

These levels are shown in Figure 3. The products at each level vary in their size, design and functions.

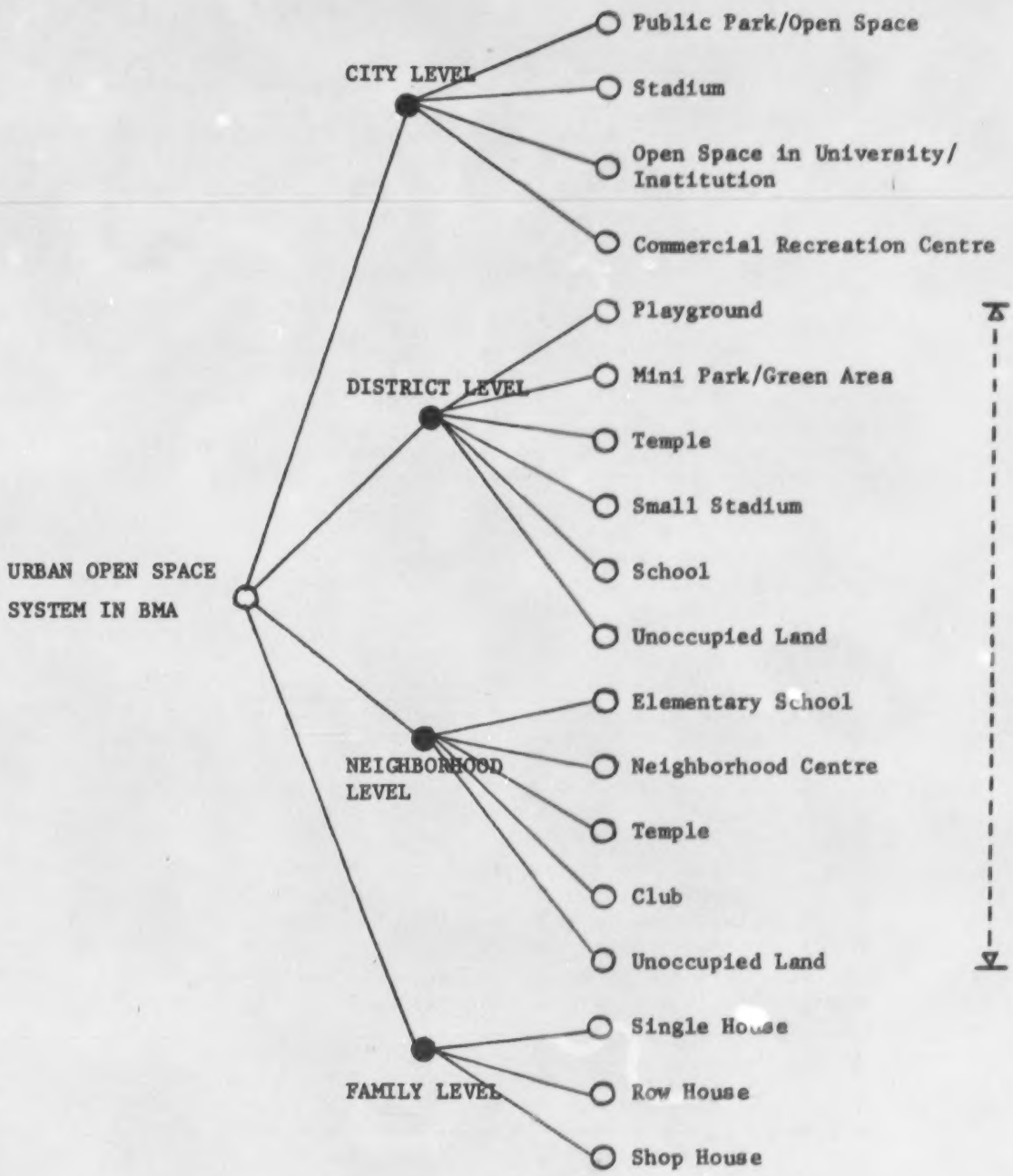

FIGURE 3: URBAN OPEN SPACE SYSTEM IN BANGKOK

V. PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING OPEN SPACE

The problems of providing open space in Bangkok are not only limited to the shortage of land and the high cost of development. Planning and policies are also of utmost importance to the successful provision of open space. In the past, the BMA, the major supplier of open space, concentrated its efforts only in providing open space with an eye to general needs at the city and district levels. Since these two levels of open space require considerable resources and negotiations, the BMA could only produce a few sites.

For children between 4 and 14 years of age, playgrounds and small open spaces at the district and neighborhood levels are most desirable. Therefore, the BMA policy and plans for providing large-scale open space at the city and district levels do not seem to be appropriate. Their efforts should be spent in providing many small open spaces at the district and the neighborhood levels scattered in various areas throughout the city.

At present, the amount of open space at the district level is still lower than the required standard set by the BMA. It appears that the BMA alone does not have enough resources to provide open space at a fast enough rate to cope with the pressing demand. Consequently, full participation from all other producers is needed.

Another important point is the standard of open space of 1 km^2 for 70,000 persons set by the BMA. If the present situation is to be improved to meet its standard, the BMA will have to acquire an additional 60 km^2 of land. US $1.8 billion will be needed to acquire the land. This is clearly unrealistic, considering the present US $4 million allocated by the BMA for open space development.

As land is the most serious constraint of open space production in Bangkok, the problem of efficient land use in Bangkok should be scrutinized. It appears that there is still a lot of vacant land in Bangkok which belongs to speculators. Two racetracks and one prison in the middle of the city do not seem to be efficient land uses. Opportunities presented by these circumstances should be explored, although issues raised can have far-reaching political impact.

Finally, the problem of participation from the public in the development of open space cannot be overlooked. This is very important as far as the general physical environment is concerned. Most open spaces in Bangkok are littered, thus degrading the aesthetic value of the open space as well as increasing the cost and burden of maintenance.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The following major conclusions may be drawn:

1. Shortage of open space for recreation is one of the major urban problems in Bangkok. The available open space is presently 0.09% of the total urban space.

2. There are 600,000 children in Bangkok, about half of whom are in low-income families; children of low-income families are in greater need of open space than are children of middle and high-income families.

3. The major producer of open space is the BMA, which at present does not have enough resources to adequately meet the demand for open space.

4. The production of open space carried out by the BMA should be oriented towards open space at the district and neighborhood levels. Emphasis should be placed on distributing small open spaces or playgrounds to various areas of Bangkok.

5. All producers of open space, including the BMA, should participate fully and should coordinate and integrate their efforts.

6. Land is the major constraint of open space production. Therefore, the problem of fully and efficiently utilizing Bangkok's land deserves close attention.

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THE BANGKOK METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION YOUTH CENTRE

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I. BACKGROUND

Due to social and economic changes, as well as population growth, some young people today neglect their studies in favor of gambling, drug addiction and other forms of disruptive behavior, causing major difficulties for their families, their nation and their society. To prevent and solve this problem, the Thai Ministry of the Interior has advised all provincial governors to establish youth recreation centres to persuade young people to spend their free time usefully. In 1960, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration constructed three recreation centres; the BMA provided the personnel and annual subsidies for other recreation centres as well. In 1968, these centres were combined and renamed "The Youth Centre", and responsibility for them was delegated directly to the BMA. Staff are part of the BMA, which also provides the budget.

II. OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the recreation centres:

1. To serve as hobby centres, so that young people can spend their free time in activities which are useful for themselves and their society;
2. To offer opportunities for rest and play;
3. To provide training in disciplines and regulations appropriate to individuals' age and sex, in order to promote conduct and personality traits suitable for young people's adaptation to their society;
4. To train children to cooperate, to be good leaders and good followers under democratic rules, and to be responsible for helping their country and society.

III. ADMINISTRATION

The youth centre administration is composed of the following:

A. The Youth Centre Promotion Committee, whose members are appointed by the governor of the BMA, for two-year terms. Its functions are to give advice, to solve problems, to raise funds and obtain donations, and to seek volunteers.

B. The Youth Centre and Playground Section, Recreation Division, and the Bureau of Public Welfare is responsible for administration and implementation of policies set by the Committee.

C. The recreation superintendent is responsible for inspecting and advising on the operation of the centre, as well as submitting reports on difficulties and remedies to the Bureau of Social Welfare.

D. Officials on duty:

1. The centre superintendent inspects the centre and promotes activities. For convenience, in the case of any centre situated in a school compound, the school's headmaster is appointed centre superintendent.

2. The chief of the centre is responsible for operating the centre in accordance with government policy, supervising the officials who organize the activities, keeping supply records, and cooperating with other related offices.

3. The assistant chief, who is appointed by the chief with the consent of the Recreation Division, assists the chief and takes care of the centre when the chief is absent.

4. The social welfare specialist is responsible for enrolling new members as well as analysing and helping to solve the problems of young people in the area.

5. Youth leaders are responsible for organizing activities and supervising and teaching the members who participate. They include permanent leaders, who are regular staff members; temporary leaders, who are specialists in particular subject areas; and volunteers.

IV. OPERATION

A. Membership: Members must be between 8 and 18 years of age. Applicants complete application forms and need consent from their parents and headmasters. The fee is 2 Baht.

B. Hours of Operation: The centre is open from Tuesdays to Saturdays, between 10:00 and 18:00 hours; it is closed on Sundays, Mondays and official holidays.

C. Activities Available:

1. Weekly and monthly schedules are announced in advance. Some of the activities available are:

a) outdoor sports, such as basketball, soccer, volleyball and badminton;

b) indoor sports, such as table tennis and chess;

c) self-defence, including boxing, sword-fighting, karate and judo;

d) music, both Thai and western;

e) dance, both classical Thai and folk dance;

f) performances, including dramas, public speaking and debates;

g) educational activities, for example, field trips and classes in such subjects as English, mathematics and drawing;

h) handicrafts and nutrition, including carpentry, masonry and cooking;

i) swimming lessons.

2. In addition, the centre organizes

a) camping during the summer vacation;

b) public service, such as assisting the government, religious groups and other organizations.

3. Special events include

a) National Children's Day;

b) Songkran Day;

c) Youth Athletic Day;

d) Exhibition programmes to mark special days, such as the King's birthday and the anniversary of the establishment of the municipality of Bangkok.

4. Training programmes and seminars for leaders and volunteers are also organized.

D. Social Welfare: The centre carries on social welfare work to help young people solve family and behavior problems. The social welfare specialist performs the following tasks:

1. Interviewing applicants, explaining the centre's activities, and keeping records;

2. Helping members to join activities they like;

3. Managing group activities, and helping each member to gain group experience;

4. Solving any problems that develop on an individual basis, by means of, for example, interviews and visits to members' homes, as well as keeping records of the problems and the assistance given so that they will be easy to follow up;

5. Contacting other related offices concerning members' problems, such as the Social Welfare Division, the Public Health Centre, the Labor Department, the Child and Youth Welfare Division, and hospitals;

6. Guiding members' education;

7. Publicizing the operations of the centre to increase public awareness and support, so as to facilitate, for example, the establishment of relationships between members' families;

8. Assessing and analysing problems and needs of the members of the centre and of the community.

E. Finance: The youth centres receive financial support from the BMA for building maintenance, equipment and staff salaries. Subsidies for organizations and clubs are also provided.

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THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION ON CHILDREN'S USE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES IN SWEDEN

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I will discuss some social problems which are connected with the fact that population groups in Sweden which are subordinate economically, politically and socially live, to a great extent, spatially separated from those population groups which occupy dominant positions in Swedish society: they are socially segregated. This social segregation depends upon discrimination against such population groups as poor workers, immigrants, households on social welfare and members of ethnic minorities. The fact that some groups within a society are socially subordinated to other population groups is related to other characteristics of these groups, such as their relative lack of economic resources and their lack of political power. In this paper, however, I will not devote the available space to a detailed analysis of these relationships. Before discussing the character and the effects of socioeconomic segregation in Swedish cities, I will devote some attention to an analysis of the relationship between social segregation and other forms of negative treatment of our underprivileged groups.

SOCIAL SEGREGATION: A FORM OF DISCRIMINATION

Let me begin with a rather formalistic definition. When members of the superior social classes in a society avoid contact with members of inferior groups in that society in a more or less consistent way, these subordinate groups are exposed to a form of negative treatment, or discrimination.

It is worth remembering that many forms of such negative treatment exist. Negative treatment might be very easily identified as such, for example, when the members of the lower social classes in a society repeatedly describe underprivileged groups in a derogative and prejudiced way (which is particularly common with regard to ethnic minorities). Another easily identified form consists of threats of force and violence against members of such groups in order to get them to act in accordance with the interests of the groups in power. Of course, the actual use of force and violence against underprivileged groups also belongs in this category.

When the members of the ascendant social classes consciously avoid contact with members of weaker social groups, their actions are not so easily identified as forms of negative treatment. This depends upon several circumstances.

First, individual members of the dominant groups argue that they avoid relations with members of some subordinate group simply as the result of very personal preferences, even if it happens that all (or almost all) the members of the dominant group act in this way, and even if it is clear that they believe that members of this underprivileged group should not be permitted to acquire wealth and power in their society. Second, the more powerful are frequently able to steer the planning and the building of such facilities as housing and service establishments in such a way that those less powerful are for all practical purposes exposed to very definite hindrances in using such facilities. This can be done without directly stating that certain groups are not welcome in particular neighborhoods and facilities. It is only when members of underprivileged groups are excluded from some facilities by laws and regulations that the avoidance of physical and social contacts becomes in an open way a form of negative social discrimination. Third, the situation is complicated by the fact that members of subordinate groups frequently themselves abstain from social contacts with the members of the dominant groups in their society, but for quite other reasons than those which lie behind the fact that the dominant groups try to separate themselves from the subordinate ones.

The fact that it is not easy to identify many forms of social segregation as the result of action consciously carried out in order to discriminate against underprivileged groups means that it is not easy to counteract such behavior.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING SEGREGATION AND OTHER FORMS OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION IN SWEDISH CITIES

Spatial separation of subordinate groups from the dominant social strata sharpens the negative discrimination to which these groups are exposed, and is an integrated and essential part of the negative treatment to which the members of such groups are continuously exposed in Sweden. Children are particularly hurt by this kind of discrimination.

Children in these groups must spend a great part of their youth in poorer and less stimulating environments than those available to children from other social strata. This is the case particularly for such children in our big cities. They grow up in neighborhoods where access to public services and leisure activities is limited and where the quality of existing facilities is lower than in the areas where the more privileged social classes live and spend the main part of their leisure time. An important fact is that playgrounds, nurseries, schools, youth centres and leisure facilities, including playgrounds, sports fields and cultural establishments, in these lower class areas on the whole offer their users a less varied and less stimulating social environment than the corresponding institutions in the neighborhoods of upper class and middle class children in Sweden.

This has been demonstrated in many studies of social segregation in Sweden. Among these studies, I would like to mention particularly one by Conny and Marianne Svenning on social segregation within the municipal nurseries in the city of Malmö, and the ongoing study by Berit Anderson,

Göran Arnman and Ingrid Jensson on school segregation in four Swedish cities and their surrounding suburban areas (Stockholm, Malmö, Linköping and Boras). The main results of these studies appear in a report prepared by the Swedish government as part of the nation's contribution to the International Year of the Child, initiated and sponsored by the United Nations.[1]

Historically, this spatial separation is related to the development of Sweden's large industrial cities. Such cities began to develop towards the end of the nineteenth century. In our preindustrial merchant towns, the spatial separation of the various social classes was not at all as sharp as it became in the industrial cities to which these towns were transformed in the decades just before and after 1900. The growth of large factories with hundreds and thousands of workers led to the development of large continuous housing areas, such as tenement areas, for the working class. At a later stage, the development of clusters of work sites for middle class and upper class employees and for the professions in centrally located areas in the big cities meant that some housing districts became very much dominated by inhabitants who were members of these special strata. This pattern was heavily influenced by the development of new means of transportation such as streetcars, commuter trains, subway systems and automobiles and roads designed for them. The effect of this development in the three largest cities in Sweden (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö, with between 200,000 and 800,000 inhabitants), and to some extent also in our cities of medium size (those with between 80,000 and 150,000 inhabitants, such as Västeras, Linköping, Boras, Eskilstuna and Norrköping), is that today, they have a very clearcut, visible pattern of social segregation. Working class families, households on social welfare and immigrants (who are to a very substantial extent employed as blue collar workers), live in particular districts - designed and built for them - while other areas are designed and built for the more affluent parts of the population.

The particular relevance of this situation for the well-being of young people is quite obvious. Most people, but particularly children, spend the main part of their time within or around the home, within a limited area. Segregation of housing for them results, as well, in segregation in other services and facilities which they use.

Although segregated housing is to a great extent caused by the existence of large segregated work sites (such as factories and offices) for the adult population, segregated housing also in many ways reinforces work site segregation. There exists a complicated but strong reinforcement pattern among the development of work site segregation, housing segregation, school segregation and the segregation of the various kinds of public services and leisure institutions.

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[1] Mats Forsberg and Stefan Petterson, Segregationens Konsevenser för Barn (Stockholm, 1979). The report consists of two volumes: the first gives an overview of the problem, while the second one presents six background papers by social scientists and practitioners.

Today, social segregation in Swedish cities has deplorable effects on the lives of many individuals. It can also be seen as a social problem on the structural level in the sense that the authorities in our big municipalities have produced and continue to produce a city structure that favors the interests of upper and middle class people, disregarding the interests of underprivileged groups.

SOCIAL SEGREGATION AND SOCIAL CONTACTS

Researchers disagree on the influence of the pattern of socioeconomic segregation in housing upon the amount of social contacts between members of various socioeconomic groups. Although there is not much empirical data on this topic, most Swedish researchers agree that homogeneous working class areas in large cities have frequently become areas of intense social interaction among their inhabitants. They are also characterized by a high amount of mutual support in daily life. In such housing areas in both large cities and small industrial towns, the workers have developed strong political organizations and a real working class culture. The extent to which corresponding phenomena can be found in middle class and upper class-dominated housing areas is not known in detail from any empirical studies in Sweden, but authors who have described such communities in novels and historical studies frequently suggest directly or indirectly that this is the case.[2]

However, it is not very obvious that social interaction between members of different social classes increases substantially when they live close to each other in socially integrated housing areas. It has been suggested by many writers that social contacts do not develop because people live close to each other, but because they must cooperate in their jobs or otherwise. On the other hand, it might be expected that people who function on different levels in hierarchies at large work sites or in other employment settings may cooperate more smoothly if they are accustomed to meeting each other in their neighborhoods. It is also obvious that a common desire that an integrated neighborhood function well might lead to the development of social contacts between members at various points on the socioeconomic ladder. This might enhance the development of at least some amount of mutual understanding, shared ways of thinking, and shared attitudes and beliefs among people from the upper and lower echelons in a community.

This question has been the focus of a heated debate in Sweden between those in favor of the idea that progress in a society is best achieved through cooperation between members of various socioeconomic strata (this consensus model is frequently hinted at by philosophers and sociologists as a Durkheimian way of thinking) and those who believe that progress must be achieved through struggle between different social classes (this conflict model is obviously strongly connected with a Marxist way of thinking).

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[2] A few working class areas in big cities in Sweden have been studied and described by anthropologists and sociologists. For example, Ake Daun has published an interesting study on the working class area on the island of Reimersholme in Stockholm (Förortsliv, Stockholm: Prisma, 1974).

THE HISTORY AND EFFECTS OF TWO FORMS OF HOUSING SEGREGATION IN SWEDISH CITIES: SLUM POCKETS AND SOCIOECONOMIC POLARIZATION

Not all forms of socioeconomic segregation lead to important differences in environmental quality for different social classes. There exist mild forms of segregation which do not have such consequences. Sometimes the differential effects on environmental quality stemming from such segregation are reduced by effective countermeasures (which is sometimes hinted at by talking about "separate but equal"). According to my experience with respect to Swedish cities, youngsters suffer the most severe consequences from two particular types of segregation.

One of them is the existence of slum pockets. Such can be found in all our large cities. One example is the Aspudden area in Stockholm, another the Haga area in Göteborg and a third one the Ostergard area in Malmö. These are all rather small housing areas, with from one to a few thousand inhabitants having a very low average income. Usually, the residents in these areas are, to a very high degree, recorded as cases in the register of the municipal department of social services.

Such housing areas developed through industrialization, when some working class areas deteriorated into "deportation areas" for problem-loaded households and individuals. Children and youngsters who live in these spots are very obviously exposed to a lot of negative influences. They will usually, very early in life, witness the excessive use of alcohol, will see and hear much about the use of narcotics, and will be encouraged to participate in delinquent and criminal activities. Besides that, they will be exposed to the stigma of living in an area which is looked upon as an inferior place to live by most people - sometimes even by school companions from neighboring areas and by teachers and social welfare officers.

The other form of segregation is the socioeconomic polarization of our big cities. This is a form of ecological differentiation, the origin of which can frequently be found in the way the first working class areas and the first upper class areas were located during the early phases of the industrialization process in our old merchant towns. At that time, one end of the city became the preferred housing area for the wealthy and the influential. Perhaps it was close to existing cultural facilities in the old city centre, perhaps the nature of the transportation system made it a desirable place to locate, perhaps its natural beauty made it desirable; there are other reasons as well. These new housing areas became attractive later on because of the social composition of their population as well, while the working class areas, usually located close to factory districts, also became less attractive for the upper and middle class people because the working class was predominant. The result of this is that we now have, in most of our large and medium cities, one "pole" which is mainly populated by people from the middle and upper classes (for example, the northern part of the metropolitan area of Stockholm) and one "pole" where the main part of the inhabitants belongs to the working class (for example, the southern part of Stockholm). Göteborg is polarized in the same way between a south-west middle and upper class area and a north-east working class area. Malmö is, in a very clear way, divided into an eastern part, where one will find mainly working class people, and a western part, dominated by the middle and upper classes.

Although these differences are not always easy to detect by direct observation, they can easily be determined by analysing existing collections of data. It is easy to ascertain that the schools in the working class areas usually have less qualified teachers (at least if one uses number of years in service as a criterion) and that the access to medical, commercial and cultural services is usually not as good as in upper class and middle class areas. The use of other indices will corroborate these findings.

This socioeconomic polarization has on the whole become sharpened in recent years, but it has also been somewhat modified, with regard to its ecological form, by the way in which the city authorities have planned and developed housing areas during the last two decades. Characteristics of newer development is the acceptance of the idea that new housing in the cities should consist of two kinds of developments: multi-storey rental apartments, and privately-owned bungalows and rowhouses. These two types of housing are to a great extent located in such a way that they support and emphasize polarization that already exists.

In consequence, youngsters in our large and medium Swedish cities actually grow up in "different worlds". Anyone who is interested can easily observe this by visiting (during the same day) some playgrounds, nurseries, schools and youth centres within the two poles of such a city.[3]

MEASURES FOR COUNTERACTING SOCIOECONOMIC SEGREGATION IN SWEDISH CITIES

I have already emphasized that segregation in Swedish cities, which seems to have increased in recent years, most probably has many negative effects. Yet it is difficult to prove conclusively that these effects exist.

There is also good reason to fear that children and youngsters are particularly exposed to these negative effects. In their formative years with regard to intellectual and emotional development, they have particular need for a stimulating, rich social environment, if they are not to be deprived of their chances to develop into creative and mature human beings.

At present, measures for counteracting social segregation are being debated. In this section, I will describe them.

I would like to begin, however, by emphasizing that there is no real hope that significant improvement is possible in the near future. The inertia in the present social structure of our cities seems to be enormous, and it easily overwhelms everyone who digs deeply into the problem. Solutions are nevertheless considered, and attempts are made.

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[3] This situation is very well amplified in an expressive short paper by Anders Abelin and Karin Paulsen, "Beskrivningar av olika slags daghem", published in Volume 2 of Segregationens Konsekvenser för Barn, op. cit., by Mats Forsberg and Stefan Petterson. Another recent book which contains much material relevant to this section of the paper is Helena M. Henschen (ed.), Barn i Stan Fran Sekelskiftet till Sjuttiotalet (Stockholm, 1979).

I. MEASURES WHICH ATTACK SOCIAL SEGREGATION AS AN OVERALL STRUCTURAL PROBLEM

We must find ways to reconstruct our cities based upon the principle of equal access to all kinds of facilities for all citizens, irrespective of class. Work sites should be designed and located and housing financed and managed according to this principle. It should also be considered in planning the structure and functioning of such facilities as playgrounds, nurseries, schools and youth centres. We in Sweden try to do so in preparing plans for new suburban areas and in renewing the inner areas of our cities, but we do not have the necessary economic means to do so for our big agglomerations and municipalities as a whole. We have inherited our cities with their "built-in" inadequacies and injustices, and these cannot be eradicated overnight. It will take decades.

II. MEASURES WHICH ATTACK PARTICULAR STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION

More hope comes from some proposals for changing particular elements in the physical structure of cities and the rules which regulate the uses of these structures. These countermeasures will not eliminate social segregation completely, but they might be used to reduce it in such areas where its negative effects are considered to be especially strong.

One technique which has been used from time to time is the rebuilding of slum pockets of small apartments by remodelling some of the housing units into big and well-outfitted apartments that can attract a richer clientele than the former slum inhabitants. This method has frequently been met by considerable resistance from the slum-dwellers themselves, because it might mean that urban renewal becomes removal of the poor. Another way, which has not been used so frequently - for rather obvious reasons - is to let working class households move into middle class dominated areas with the assistance of social welfare authorities.

The idea of reducing socioeconomic segregation by selectively distributing households with particular characteristics, such as families belonging to recently arrived immigrant groups, has also to some extent been used by some municipal housing authorities (for example, in Malmö). The main reason for doing so has usually not been to reduce the negative effects of social segregation for the inhabitants of the housing areas involved, but to reduce the number of vacant apartments in them. In these attempts, the collision between the traditional right of individuals and households to choose their own places to live on the existing housing market (within the range of those opportunities they can afford) and endeavors to reduce social segregation is rather obvious. The discussion of this measure goes on in Sweden, and new variations, which try to avoid giving the inhabitants the feeling that they are being manipulated, will very probably be tested in the near future.

If one assumes that we must accept and live with housing segregation in our big cities for the foreseeable future, we might try to reduce the effects of this segregation by locating and building appropriate facilities in such a way that children (and parents) from different social

circles are brought together in these establishments. This can be achieved in numerous ways. These structures can be built, for example, not within homogeneous working class areas or homogeneous upper class and middle class areas, as is now usually the case, but between such areas. Another possibility is to introduce strict rules by which particular schools, for example, are to be used by families from particular neighborhoods, more or less independent of the location of either the homes or the schools. In this connection, the use of bussing has been discussed, and strongly discarded as a possible means. In most Swedish municipalities, large numbers of school children are bussed every day, but never in order to counteract the fact that schools in big Swedish cities are heavily segregated. A Swedish child is bussed or travels long distances in cities by public transportation because he or she needs a particular kind of educational programme or because the schools in his or her own neighborhood are overcrowded. In rural areas, bussing over long distances is very important and completely accepted for those children who live in sparsely populated areas without school facilities. But no school authority in Sweden would dare to propose - or even contemplate - bussing as a means of reducing socioeconomic segregation in schools.

III. MEASURES WHICH ATTEMPT TO REDUCE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION

The most promising of the countermeasures which have been discussed in Sweden of late - and the only one that is really practiced to some degree - is the idea of compensating those who live in areas with poor housing and poor service facilities by giving them extra resources in the form of personnel and money for extra goods and activities. This idea was introduced in Sweden by a national commission on the internal organization of schools. According to a proposal by this committee, those municipalities where serious social problems obviously exist in the schools are to be given money from the state to be distributed among appropriate school districts in order to compensate children in problem-loaded schools for the low quality of life in their part of the city. This money is usually used to pay social welfare workers (skolkuratorer) and specially trained teachers, who devote their time to children with particular problems. Supporting reading clinics and leisure activities are common ways to use such money.

The idea of compensatory action has also been accepted slowly as a rationale for allocating extra money to various kinds of community work projects in problem-loaded housing areas. This way of thinking lies behind a good deal of the recent growth of community work in Sweden. It can be exemplified by such community work projects as the Ostergard project in Malmö, the Aspudden project in Stockholm, the Pitangen project in Landskrona, and the Raslätt project in Jönköping, to mention only a few of at least fifteen to twenty ambitious projects which have been carried out since 1968.

A CONCLUDING REMARK

It must be kept in mind that although socioeconomic segregation is one of those social phenomena that give rise to negative treatment of

subordinate and underprivileged groups in our cities - and that are of particular relevance for those children and youngsters who belong to these social strata - it is not the only form of such negative treatment.

Children in families who belong to disadvantaged groups are frequently treated in derogatory and prejudiced ways, even if they happen to live in socially integrated housing areas and spend their school hours in socially well-balanced schools. Studies of the social life within school classes have demonstrated that there exists a large amount of social segregation within socioeconomically integrated school classes. Children from poor families and immigrant children are often - for many reasons - not accepted as members of upper class and middle class cliques and associations. Those who live in middle class housing areas and go to school where there are few other children with their own social background may feel very isolated and awkward. There also seems to be reason to expect that children from different social strata are treated in different ways by their teachers, even when they are in the same school and the same classroom.

These are some of the reasons why there are no easy solutions to the problems of children and youngsters that are connected with the existence of social segregation and social discrimination with regard to housing and other facilities in our cities. These problems are all aspects of the overall social structure. The fundamental dilemma is how to cope in a justifiable way with the problems of children and youngsters formed by different social conditions irrespective of their coming from segregated or integrated areas and schools.

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GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING PLAY SPACES

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I. INTRODUCTION

Our play space guidelines are designed to accompany municipal planning policies, and provincial and regional planning legislation. They have been developed as an attempt to ensure that the characteristics of children and youth and their play requirements are taken into full account in the planning of our communities, especially the residential areas. Because we believe that it is impossible to legislate good design, we intend these guidelines to increase awareness and understanding of children's characteristics and play needs and so to stimulate and ensure a total planning approach for children's play.

The guidelines are an advocacy and resource tool for those determining or implementing policies which affect the design, construction or redevelopment of neighborhoods and communities. They are directed to the many individuals and groups who make up the planning team, including neighborhood and city planners, architects and landscape architects, recreation and housing authorities, citizen groups (such as tenant associations), social service and education authorities, elected officials, and advocates on behalf of children and youth.

II. PLANNING FOR PLAY: AN OVERVIEW

Children and youth make up 35% of Canada's population. How can such an important segment of the population be ignored in the planning or redevelopment of our communities?

Canada has been slow to respond to the need for play opportunities for children of all ages. Despite overwhelming evidence that play is an essential factor in the development of every child, many rural, suburban and urban environments restrict the opportunities to enjoy creative and adventurous play. In some neighborhoods such opportunities are completely denied.

Our 1977 random survey of municipalities revealed that most planning policies did not recognize the play needs of children and youth. Only one out of two respondents to a national questionnaire, distributed under our auspices in 1979, believed that his or her neighborhood was a good place to bring up children. A major criticism was the lack of open recreation areas and designated spaces where children can play safely.

The rapid rate of urbanization is reshaping our communities. High density housing, rising land prices, and increased traffic have drastically reduced the space available. Vacant lots and natural areas where children can find adventure, fun and freedom are now rare.

Evidence shows that inadequate play opportunities contribute to many of the personal and social problems affecting young people today. The incidence of delinquent behavior, vandalism and poor social adjustment can be decreased by more opportunities for positive play experience.

Play is important in the child's educational, social and physical development. Play involves children of all ages in freely chosen activities which develop their skills, teach them to relate to their peers, and help them understand and develop their personalities and potentials. It is through play that children learn about themselves, others and the world around them. Rich and varied play experiences are as necessary to the child as good nutrition and adequate sleep; therefore, comprehensive planning for play space throughout the community is of critical importance. Play is learning for life. To deny play opportunities is to restrict essential preparation for the demands of adulthood. The planning process must therefore incorporate the needs of young people as an urgent priority.

Planning for children at play has almost always meant the planning of playgrounds. The myth persists that children will and should play in spaces designated as play areas or playgrounds. Children play anywhere and everywhere. Memories of our own childhoods can confirm this observation. It must be recognized and play opportunities planned accordingly throughout the whole community.

Children need both informal and formal (or designated) play spaces: places where they can run and jump, indulge in fantasy play, use their imaginations, socialize, test their courage and challenge others; places where they can witness the everyday activities in the life of their communities. Opportunities for play must be woven into the fabric of the community. To provide creative, varied and safe play opportunities for children through a total planning approach is a goal of the play space guidelines.

III. PLAY SPACE GUIDELINES

a) Importance of Play

Play spaces need to be provided in all new and existing residential areas within ready access from the dwelling units to accommodate the play needs of children and youth and to encourage family participation. Children play everywhere, on sidewalks, at doorsteps and along streets. Provision should be made for this type of casual and incidental play. In addition, there is a need for a variety of spaces to accommodate the activities and interests of different groups such as infants and toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children, teenagers, adults, elderly people and physically handicapped people of all ages. Children's play spaces should be designed to

stimulate and nurture the child's total development, providing opportunities for social interaction as well as physical, creative and cognitive play. The provision of these planned play spaces as well as the places for spontaneous, incidental play is important throughout the whole community, and especially critical in areas with multiple family dwellings.

In the development of play facilities within any residential area, the preschool and elementary school-age children are the most important groups to consider. They play closer to home and have specific characteristics which should influence the location and design of their play spaces in important ways. Teenagers, however, while able to use adult facilities, still need planning that recognizes their special peer group needs.

The natural interaction of different age groups is an important learning and socializing factor. Facilities which cater to different needs and interests can be placed in close proximity to each other. However, they must be planned and defined so as to discourage negative domination or interference with the play of younger children by the more mature and physically skilled older ones.

b) Recommendations for Young Children (1-6 Years)

Young children between 1 and 6 years of age rely greatly on parents; they therefore play close to the dwelling unit. Their play spaces should be located within easy and safe walking distance, that is, 100m (110 yards) and within view of as many family units as possible in order to aid parental supervision.

The following play facilities should be included in plans affecting young children:

1. Preschool Play Park: These outside play spaces should be small and intimate, with areas for creative, cognitive, social, physical and quiet play, and should include seating areas for parents who accompany their children. The preschool play space should have a natural or garden-like setting. It should be defined by a low enclosure to discourage toddlers from wandering off, to help with casual supervision and to prevent interference from older children. All play equipment for the area should be in scale with the preschooler. The recommended size for this space is from 72-250m^2 (800-2,500 sq. ft.). Approximately 20-30 children can be accommodated at one time. A larger number is out of scale and beyond the coping ability of this age group.

2. Preschool Play Centre: To accommodate all-weather play, an indoor-outdoor facility should be provided. It should be open year-round, free of charge. Equipped similarly to a nursery school, it needs an indoor playroom, bathroom facilities, storage area and some refreshment facilities, as well as an adjoining fully equipped preschool play park. Existing facilities such as a school classroom or community centre can often be adapted for this purpose. The play centre differs from a nursery school or registered play group in that parents must accompany their children as they would at all times to a park. Therefore, a design feature is comfortable adult seating space inside and out. Play centres require supervision, but the

ratio of staff to children can be 1 to 30 or more, due to the presence and assistance of parents. Often play centres share the facilities with a regulation nursery school on a half-day basis to divide the cost of equipment and maintenance. The recommended size for the indoor space is 45m^2 (500 sq. ft.). The total area of the building and play park is 185-370m^2 (2,000-4,000 sq. ft.).

One such centre should exist in each neighborhood or residential development area. It is particularly important to provide this facility in high density areas where it can supplement apartment living. Approximately 70-100 children and adults can be accommodated at one time in a play centre.

c) Recommendations for School Age Children and Youth (6-11 and 12-17 Years)

Children and youth in these age groups are more independent and not as home-centered as preschoolers. The younger ones, especially, still prefer to play in the immediate neighborhood. Therefore, the play spaces for young school-aged children should be within walking distance of the family dwelling, that is, not further than 300m (350 yards). As the child matures and as skill in sports develops, the standard-sized sports facilities such as baseball diamonds, hockey rinks and tennis courts, are sought out. Children and teenagers will travel 400m (¼ mile) to 1,500m (one mile) to reach these types of facilities.

However, during an average day, this age group is involved in a lot of informal unstructured play, creative and social exploration, physical exercise and competitive fun. These activities are important in the development of the whole child and can be accommodated

1. in a play area imaginatively designed and equipped,
2. in a cleared area that is well-sited,
3. in a smaller space that is equipped for quiet games or activities.

This age group also enjoys working with real tools and scrap materials to build huts, private hideouts and challenging play equipment as in an adventure playground.

The following play facilities should be incorporated into plans that are concerned with young people aged 6-11 and 12-17.

1. Creative Playground

The younger children (6-11) enjoy a well-designed and equipped play space. They need equipment which challenges their developing physical competence, ingenuity and sense of inquiry, so they must be provided with a range of choices and plenty of manipulative materials. The diversity of nature provides endless play opportunity and therefore the natural environment should be preserved or enhanced. In addition, appropriate siting and landscaping of the creative play area can help buffer sound. To encourage

community interest and responsibility, the space should still be open to the view of passers-by. The recommended size for a creative playground is approximately 90-900m^2 (1,000-10,000 sq. ft.). Approximately 30-150 children can be accommodated at one time.

2. Open Space for Casual Play

1. A flat area, grassed or hard-surfaced, should be provided for informal games of all types such as ball games, net games, street hockey, ice hockey, skating loops, disc golf, turf skiing, creative drama, puppeting, music and dancing.
2. Natural differences in elevation and man-made mounds provide excellent casual play areas for all seasons and will accommodate various activities such as climbing, rolling, sliding and snow and turf skiing.
3. Preservation and restoration of natural areas such as wood lots, marshes and rock outcroppings present an infinite variety of play opportunities.

There should be adequate separation space from dwelling units, private outdoor space, and the designated play areas to minimize noise and the nuisance factor. Landscaping around the perimeter can help define the area and discourage the play from spilling out of bounds. These play areas should be no further than 300m (350 yards) walking distance from the dwelling unit. The recommended size is 75m^2 (1,000 sq. ft.) or more. The number of children and adults accommodated at one time would vary with activity and space available.

3. Small Spaces for Quiet Activities

Young people enjoy quiet sitting places with tables to gather, talk, to be involved in arts and crafts, and to play table games and other games of skill and concentration. Small parcels of common space can be used for these purposes. They can be enjoyed by the whole family for such activities as outdoor table tennis, tether ball, shuffleboard and horse-shoe pitch. Landscaping features can be designed to protect these quieter activities from the more random play of biking, running and ball games. Separation space from the dwelling units does not need to be great, due to the quiet, contained nature of the activities. The size of the area depends on the nature of the activities being planned.

4. Adventure Playground

This type of play option requires a supervised enclosed area where children can use real tools, left-over construction materials, and other found objects to build huts, dens and climbing structures. The adventure playground should include a permanent indoor playroom facility for year-round activities. This type of programme needs mature leadership and an ongoing community-based playground management committee. Site selection is important, since an adventure playground is like a construction site and, therefore, should be placed some distance from dwelling units. It should be enclosed by a fence 2.5-3m high (8-10 ft.) with pleasant exterior landscaping. This acts as a visual and sound barrier; it should be possible to close the playground when leaders are not present. The drawing area for adventure playgrounds can be large: a population of 5,000 and up to 1,500m (one mile) in walking distance

from the young people's homes. Recommended size for an adventure playground is 1,000-4,000m^2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ - 1 acre). The number of children who can be accommodated at one time depends on the number of play leaders. For example, 1-4 leaders can usually work with 100-200 children.

5. Comprehensive Play Area

If appropriate, a combination of play spaces, such as a preschool play park, creative playground, open space, casual play area and adventure playground, can be achieved by utilizing landscape features or low and high fencing to define the different areas. In this way the young child is not threatened by the rougher, more active play of older children, and different types of activities do not interfere with one another. A large comprehensive play area cannot replace small preschool play parks; they still need to be located throughout the community close to the dwelling units.

d) Recommendations for Whole Family Activities

To permit participation by the whole family, facilities such as bicycle paths, cross-country ski trails, nature trails, and rinks for pleasure skating should be provided in the community. High mounds or natural areas can be preserved for skiing, go-carting, picnicking, nature walks and other family recreation activities.

e) Recommendations for Handicapped Children of All Ages

Children with special physical or mental health problems benefit from interacting as much as possible with normal children. Planners of all types of children's play spaces should ensure that there are no physical barriers to any handicapped persons and that some of the equipment is designed to challenge their physical and mental development. The adventure playground, in spite of its apparent danger, has proved to be excellent for the older handicapped child from the point of view of both a play concept and a play facility. The children experiment within their own abilities upon their own initiative, with helpful but non-directive leadership.

f) Special Considerations

Within new developments, the amount of land allocated for play spaces for children and youth should be sited early in the land assembly process to ensure the most suitable location according to the needs of the age groups and the activities planned.

In existing communities, land available for recreation may have many constraints; for example, the vacant lot may not be in the best location for use as a play space. However, land can be made available by recycling existing little-used parks or redesigning school playgrounds for almost round-the-clock and year-round community use.

Redundant commercial or industrial land can often be recycled for use as an adventure playground or open space play area. Street closures and hydro rights-of-way should be considered as well as passive landscaped areas which can be made playable without the destruction of their aesthetic

or open space features. Also, land that is temporarily available should be kept in mind since it can be used as a play space while a more permanent use is being considered for it. In fact, all methods for temporary or permanent land acquisition should be explored. Portable equipment can quickly turn such areas into effective play spaces.

Sunshine, shade, shadows and winds greatly influence the physical comfort and play value of a space. The climatic factors and topographical features of the actual site must be taken into consideration during the design phase so that the play area will be inviting and well used.

IV. USING THE GUIDELINES: SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The play space guidelines, or any play space standards derived from the guidelines, can be applied to large communities, as well as smaller towns and villages, providing adjustments are made to suit the local conditions, requirements and resources of a given community.

While these guidelines focus primarily on physical site planning, the physical aspect is just one part of the total provision for play opportunities. In any situation, physical planning should be done in concert with social planning, thus complementing other opportunities for play.

The planning of local play spaces must be integrated into systems planning for a community. Collaboration with other departments like public works, housing, education and recreation will avoid duplication. Such a coordinated effort will also encourage a comprehensive and sensitive approach to a given community.

No one person, government department or even level of government is likely to have all the resources and expertise at hand to plan effectively for children's play opportunities. Efforts at all levels of government need to be coordinated.

Using the play space guidelines is an excellent start to planning; community participation is important. Consider local residents, child development experts and children as members of the planning team. By incorporating the ideas, suggestions and criticisms of citizens, the planning, design and management of the play space becomes a community effort. Children and youth can be important contributors to a planning team; techniques to enable their real participation are being developed. Commitment to their participation in the planning and management of play spaces is the first critical step to their involvement. Young people's participation helps to reduce their sense of alienation from their environments and communities. There are both short and long terms benefits when young people are involved in cooperative efforts and decision-making in a community.

Evaluation of the design and allocation of play spaces is essential to ensure that our environments are responsive to changing needs. Children are often the best critics of a play space; they should be consulted.

Similarly, no set of guidelines can remain valid indefinitely. The play space guidelines should be subject to ongoing review and amendments as new experiences suggest alternate directions.

The play space guidelines are not being presented as national play space standards. As with other recreation planning issues, there are both advantages and disadvantages in having guidelines quantified into standards. The key issue is how a national set of standards can be sensitive to the requirements of individual communities. The play space guidelines can be adapted for use by any agency, department or group according to its situation or jurisdiction. Can national standards permit a localized approach which responds to the particular needs, characteristics and resources of the community in question?

The play space guidelines illustrate that planning for play spaces is much more than applying national standards or allocating "X" number of acres for "Y" number of children. The guidelines approach encourages total community planning for play. This involves a knowledge of the open space system for both private and public lands and an understanding of the characteristics, user needs and resources of a particular neighborhood. An individualized approach avoids the dangers inherent in national standards where a "cookie cutter" approach to play spaces inevitably results in an inflexible, and often inappropriate, response to local conditions. The application of standards cannot be a substitute for researching and creating an individual solution for each neighborhood or community.[1]

a) Planning for Play at the Municipal Level

However, this is not to say that play space standards are never useful. Municipal authorities may wish to use these guidelines to establish a set of minimum standards that are both responsive to the community and part of a total open space system or recreation master plan.

To use the guideline approach effectively, the municipal authority must:

1. recognize play space in the community as a necessary priority;
2. know the characteristics and play needs of children and youth;
3. respond to the particular conditions, resources and requirements of a given community; and
4. determine the actual needs of the residents, including children, and involve them in the planning process.

Any municipal guideline must be coordinated with play space standards controlled by other authorities: for example, the play space standards set by housing authorities for residential developments. In Canada,

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[1] The resolutions of the International Playground Association also present relevant considerations. For a list of these resolutions, see "Appendix".

the national standard requiring children's play spaces is applicable only to new housing financed through the National Housing Act (NHA).[1]

b) Planning for Play at the Regional and Provincial Levels

The planning acts of several Canadian provinces determine the allocation or conveyance of land for park purposes or recreational use; no specific reference, however, is made to actual play space for children and youth. In some cases, existing legislation already allows municipalities to take action on the play space guidelines, but in other situations, where play is a very low priority, a clause may be needed to spell out clearly within the planning acts the legitimate claim for play spaces.

It is therefore suggested that provincial or regional planning acts be revised to include a clause allocating space for children's play within the land allotted for recreation open space. Such a clause or statement might read: "Within the land conveyed for recreation open space, opportunities for children's play must be provided. This provision for play space should consider and meet the needs of children and families regardless of age or ability."

If the child's right to play is to be protected, concerted efforts must be made to establish and implement play space guidelines or minimum standards in private or public residential developments and in the community at large. This would necessitate:

1. comprehensive planning for children's play opportunities moving out from the home, to the neighborhood, to the wider community; from front doorsteps to sidewalks and cul-de-sacs, to neighborhood parks and school yards to city-wide parks and recreation areas; and
2. integrated action by all levels of government and the many different departments and agencies such as housing, recreation, planning and education.

However, it is clear that education regarding the importance and methods of providing for children's play opportunities is as important as enabling legislation. To ensure that the child's need and right to play is protected, an effective combination of legislation and education must be developed.

APPENDIX: INTERNATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS ON PLAY SPACES

The International Playground Association, founded in 1961, is concerned with the provision and quality of play opportunities for children.

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[1] In comparison to similar standards or legislation in Sweden and Denmark, this is a very lenient position. For more information about the NHA and Danish and Swedish legislation, see Steen B. Esbensen, "Legislation and Guidelines for Children's Play Spaces in the Residential Environment" in this report.

Planning the total environment for potential play opportunities is a major interest and advocacy issue. At the IPA triennial international conferences, the following resolutions have been passed and should be taken into consideration when determining planning policies:

1. Schools often possess valuable inner city property and facilities suitable for community use round the clock, all year. All cooperative combinations between education and recreation authorities should be encouraged. When designing new schools, recreation and cultural facilities should be incorporated in the design, to facilitate higher community use (Zurich, 1964).

2. All aspects of play and the development of children must be included in the education of architects, planners, landscape architects, educators, recreation managers, play leaders, hospital workers: all persons planning for, or caring for, children in any aspect of their work (Paris, 1969, Milan, 1975).

3. Governments and local authorities should provide for the development of adventure playgrounds which must be related to all other play spaces and other types of playground, open space and areas in public parks (Vienna, 1972).

4. Governments and local authorities should make provision for the out-of-school life of children as seriously as provision of formal education, building of roads and parking places, and disposal of sewage (Vienna, 1972).

5. All levels of government must require by new laws, or by the enforcement of existing laws, that the provision of space for play be integrated into all new housing and redevelopment at the planning stage (Milan, 1975).

6. It is imperative that governments should conserve natural areas for play (Milan, 1975).

7. In order to improve the quality and widen the variety of children's play provision, and because adventure playgrounds seek to develop the child's sense of responsibility through experience with risk, governments must change their laws regarding public responsibility or interpret them more broadly (Milan, 1975).

8. Each planning team for housing and redevelopment areas should include a person knowledgeable about the needs of children (Milan, 1975).

9. The total environment should be recognized and considered for children's play, not just parks and playgrounds (Ottawa, 1978).

10. Children need a safe access to a diverse and expanding environment close to home, without the assurance of constant adult supervision (Ottawa, 1978).

11. The diversity of surroundings accessible to children should include all aspects of daily life of the adult community and its natural and built surroundings (Ottawa, 1978).

12. The process of planning, design and management of the environment should be one of participation by the total community, including its children. Professionals should work at this level to encourage community self-reliance (Ottawa, 1978).

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A PLACE TO STAND, A PLACE TO GROW: ONTARIO'S INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO PLAY

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As a recreation consultant with the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation, I have spent much of my time during the last five to six years helping municipal, regional and provincial authorities and organizations acquire, develop and manage spaces designated as children's play areas. I believe in the need for and commitment to the provision of quality play environments for all children; in this paper, I will share some of the exciting things that have been accomplished in Ontario.

My experience has left me convinced that senior government must play a role if there is to be any progress in developing communities that reflect a sensitivity to the children who live there. I wish to focus on how the government of Ontario has facilitated the changes that are occurring throughout this province in relation to the availability of quality play spaces in Ontario communities. I will also make reference to the types of people who have been involved and have helped the process of change in this province.

STRUCTURE

Let me begin with a very brief review of the structure of the Ontario government. There are 21 ministries, each of which has been assigned to one of three policy fields. These fields are the judiciary, social policy and resources policy. Included in the social policy field is my own Ministry of Culture and Recreation as well as the ministries of Health, Education, Colleges and Universities, and Community and Social Services. The prime focus of services for children is in the social policy field. But it should be noted that about 17 of the 21 ministries have some responsibility in the area of recreation and therefore some control over programmes that affect children.

The clustering of ministries into related policy fields has facilitated communication and joint planning between ministries in the same field but difficulties still occur with communication between ministries in different fields. The Ministry of Natural Resources, for example, is in the resources policy field; one of its responsibilities is to provide assistance to municipalities in the planning and development of parks which have a strong emphasis on the natural environment. That this division of the provincial government has much in common with our ministry is apparent, but

because we are in different policy fields, communication sometimes suffers, because one deals primarily with natural resource matters while the other deals with questions of social development.

We can anticipate that the issue of managing urban open space in the interest of children will present some difficulty because clear-cut authority does not fall to one ministry, or even one policy field. In this regard we are not unique. Communication seems to be a universal problem that transcends political and cultural barriers. Like everyone else, we continue to work at it and it is fair to say that it has not prevented us from making progress toward better play areas throughout the province.

With specific reference to the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, its function, as stated in the legislative act that created it, is to

> "advance and encourage responsible citizenship through the process of cultural and recreational development including
>
> a) preserving and maintaining the cultural heritage of the residents of Ontario with full recognition of their diverse traditions and background;
>
> b) promoting access to the benefits of citizenship and of active involvement in the cultural and recreational life of the province; and
>
> c) stimulating the development of new forms of cultural expression and promoting the concept of individual and community excellence."

A subsequent amendment to the original act details some specific regulations that the ministry can establish to achieve the goals set out in the original legislation.

No specific mention has been made of children either in the original act or its amendment. The intent is for the ministry to provide services and programmes for all citizens of Ontario, including children. I would like to go into some detail on the specific programmes and services that the ministry has undertaken which relate to the issue of urban space for children.

WINTARIO

Because it is so popular and well known in the province, I will begin this discussion by mentioning Wintario. Through the use of Wintario funds, local community groups have been able to proceed with recreation land acquisition and development projects that might otherwise have been beyond their financial capabilities. Administered by our ministry, Wintario is a provincial lottery that is now in its fourth year of operation. The money is raised through the sale of lottery tickets to the public; it is used, according to definite assessment criteria, to finance (on a cost-sharing basis) worthwhile community cultural or recreational projects.

Since its inception, Wintario funds have been used to develop scores of play areas throughout the province - some on a very modest scale (less than $1,000 requested), others more elaborate and sophisticated (over $35,000 requested). The exact dollar figure of Wintario assistance on a project depends on the amount of money that the community can raise.

A community association attached to an elementary school is a typical applicant. The parents, having become concerned about the unimaginative schoolyard and the lack of interesting and satisfying play opportunities for their children, undertake a fund-raising campaign and approach Wintario for assistance to either purchase and install playground apparatus or to build a structure and landscape the area themselves. If the project does not appear to be well designed, the ministry provides advice and planning assistance to the group. As a condition of grant approval, Wintario may even insist on some site design modifications.

A particularly interesting Wintario project was recently completed at Sunnyview School in Toronto. An inaccessible school courtyard was transformed into an inviting play and learning environment for physically handicapped children. For the children, confined to wheelchairs, the school courtyard had for many years been a pleasant-to-look-at but unusable space in the centre of the school's layout. A committee made up of parents, teachers, board of education representatives and ministry staff collaborated to develop an imaginative design for the area which was subsequently implemented. Wintario assistance counted for one third of the final cost of approximately $100,000. (It should be mentioned here that Wintario has provided 100% funding for projects which make existing recreational facilities accessible to the physically handicapped.)

RESOURCE CENTRE

Even if the awareness is present, groups planning the creative use of space for children can encounter difficulty in obtaining reference material. Public libraries can be excellent resources for initial research, but not many of them have extensive collections that are broad enough to meet the needs of groups in this field. For some years now, our ministry has maintained a library which is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. five days a week. We are included in the public library interlibrary loan system; Ontario residents can gain access to the ministry's collection either directly, by having materials shipped to them, or through the public library system. Information on such topics as the theory of play, child development, play area design, play for the handicapped, play leadership training, and play in special environments is available in the form of books, pamphlets, magazines, films and slide and tape presentations.

As it becomes necessary, the ministry develops materials for the resource centre in order to highlight a particular concern or issue that becomes of interest within the province. For example, the question of safety on playgrounds has arisen frequently as more and more communities have become interested in developing better play environments for their children. The ministry sponsored a research project to determine how safe children's formal

play areas really were, published the results, and made them available through the resource centre. Similarly, a study of the winter use of urban parks in Ontario, including play areas, was undertaken. Copies of this report can also be obtained through the resource centre.

STAFF

Consultants within the ministry, both in Toronto and in our field offices throughout the province, are available to assist local authorities, agencies and community groups who may be concerned about managing urban open space in the interest of children. The ministry's 135 field staff provide a first point of contact for a community wishing to take action on this issue. Depending on the nature of the request, the field consultant may then involve one or more of the specialist consultants based in Toronto to provide further details and assistance.

I would like to illustrate how the process works. Several months ago, a call for help came to me from the Windsor field office. A community group in an older section of that city is attempting to bring to the public's and to the decision-makers' attention the severe lack of effective play space for children in the neighborhood. Because of his knowledge of the community and personalities involved, the field consultant has been able to provide consulting advice on how the group should proceed, its strategy to gain public support, and what other local agencies or individuals could be of assistance. My help was requested on the matter of the potential space available for the children, and what might be done with it, as well as for ideas on resources - human, financial and printed - that could be tapped. Because of the scope of the project, both the field consultant and I expect to be heavily involved in it for the next two years. Other specialist consultants may be drawn in as it appears necessary.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The ministry is committed to leadership training in the broadest sense. It seeks to strengthen local, regional and provincial groups and organizations that are concerned with children and play by assisting them in improving their own human and material resources. It also encourages practitioner development, be it the full-time professional working in the field or the volunteer.

To this end, the ministry has organized and sponsored two provincial conferences on play and twenty-five regional workshops and seminars on this topic since 1973. In addition, the ministry has collaborated with other ministries such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to plan in-service staff professional development sessions dealing with play and play area design. It has also assisted volunteer agencies, such as the Girl Guides, Y.W.C.A., and Ontario Camping Association, to plan similar sessions for their member-volunteers.

EXPERIENCE '79

In recent years, the provincial government has instituted a summer student employment programme to assist communities and organizations in hiring students for worthwhile community projects. There are at least 20 submissions each year from municipal recreation and education authorities that relate to play area development or improvement. These projects vary greatly, but the students working on them have access to all ministry resources; sometimes their achievement is quite substantial after the 10 to 14 weeks they are employed.

IMPACT OF MINISTRY

a) Networks

The impact of the ministry's work has been positive and, if I may say so, substantial. For one thing, we have helped to develop networks of people who are working to improve urban play environments. Interdisciplinary in nature, these groups were non-existent seven years ago, but today they are helping to bring about changes in attitude in the public and among decision-makers regarding the importance of play.

Let me present three examples of such groups. The Northwestern Ontario Play Team consists of about 20 people who meet bi-monthly in Thunder Bay. The team is composed of educators, municipal recreation staff, planners, social agency staff, individuals who work with handicapped children, parents and ministry field staff. The group came into existence in 1973 following a 4-day conference on play which was sponsored by our ministry. The conference was structured in such a way that each participant was pre-selected and came as part of a regional team. This was done in the hope of spreading the benefits of the conference back to the participating local areas. The ministry subsidized the costs of the participants in return for a one-year commitment on their part to serve as advocates and change agents for children and play in their areas. All of these people fulfilled that commitment. Six years later, the team continues to exist, although its personnel is completely different. The team provides advice on play programmes, play leadership and play area design to communities throughout the vast northwestern region of the province. The ministry has provided a grant of $1,000 a year to cover travel costs for team members to the more isolated communities.

A second example is the Waterloo County Play Advisory Team in south central Ontario, which came into existence in 1974. After meeting with the physical education consultant for the Waterloo County Board of Education, I agreed to make a presentation to the elementary school principals in the county regarding the potential of the schoolyards they controlled. The ideas were well received and a committee was struck to encourage and assist with their implementation. The committee was originally composed of elementary school educators, but it soon expanded to include municipal recreation staff, community planners, parents, and university and community college faculty and students in early education, physical education and landscape design.

As the team's knowledge has increased, activities have expanded. These now include professional development workshops on play area design for elementary school teachers, consulting assistance on play area development to individual schools and to municipal parks and recreation departments within the county, public education seminars on play and play environments, assistance to students doing research on play and the operation of a regional resource centre accessible to anyone interested in children's play and play area development. Ministry funds have for the last five years facilitated the development of the resource centre and the holding of public education seminars.

Finally, there is the former Action Committee on Play, which is now known as Play On. Since 1973, an organization has been evolving in Ontario, made up primarily of practitioners from the recreation field, which has attempted to influence the parks and recreation profession on issues related to children and play. The ministry has always been a key component. The main objectives of the group are to provide learning opportunities for parks and recreation staff and volunteers, and to encourage an interdisciplinary outlook in the provision of services to children.

Under the name of the Action Committee on Play, the group organized and operated workshop sessions in conjunction with the annual conferences of the various provincial recreation and parks organizations (Ontario Recreation Society, Ontario Parks Association, Ontario Camping Association, Society of Directors of Municipal Recreation in Ontario): it assisted the ministry in planning a provincial conference on play called the Play Explosion held in 1976; its members helped with planning the 1978 International Playground Association Program held in Ottawa; and at present, under the new name of Play On, the group is planning ten sessions for a national conference of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association.

b) New Look of Play Areas

Throughout the province, even in the smallest communities, there has appeared a new look for the schoolyards and formal playgrounds within municipal parks. While many of the designs still reflect an almost complete orientation to physical play, others are responding to the social, emotional and cognitive needs of the child. Such a change reflects, I would suggest, a growing awareness that there are options to the way traditional playgrounds were set up. Two cases from the Toronto area that we have been associated with provide excellent models from which other communities can seek inspiration and practical ideas for use in their own settings.

At Dewson Community School, an arid, unappealing, asphalt-covered playground was transformed into a child's delight of sod and tree-covered hillocks, timber climbing areas, a wading pool, a gardening plot that is used yearly by the community, and a tennis court for adults. The playground is the focus of the neighborhood - it's where things happen!

The Adventure Playground at Harbourfront Park is into its sixth year of operation. Initiated first as a pilot project by the Central

Mortgage and Housing Corporation through the efforts of Polly Hill[1], the Adventure Playground has survived under great odds and is an excellent reminder that children are entitled to choice and variety in the play spaces designed and designated for them.

NEW NEEDS AND AREAS OF LITTLE PROGRESS

I have painted a rather rosy picture thus far of how well things are going in this province on matters related to urban play spaces and children. It is true that much has been achieved in the last few years as a direct result of the hard work of many people. But there still are some major gaps where little or no progress has been made.

For example, the child's right to play is safeguarded neither in the Planning Act, the legislation that guides municipal planning in Ontario, nor in most municipal official plans. As a result, throughout our province, land use decisions are constantly being made which reflect a lack of appreciation and understanding of the importance of play to the child. These decisions, particularly, eliminate informal play areas which are special places sanctioned as play environments.

This situation is perpetuated to a large measure by the elected officials at the municipal level. The Ontario government's current philosophy emphasizes encouraging local authorities to assume more and more responsibility for local planning and land use decisions. In consequence, the attitudes and knowledge of the local politician ultimately determine the kinds of play environments that are available in the community. An ongoing project, then, is to increase, within this grouping of influential decision-makers, the understanding and appreciation of why children play and how crucial it is that they make wise decisions on behalf of children regarding the disposition and development of land resources within the community. In Ontario, the challenge of influencing this group to be sensitive to children's needs is augmented by the fact that every two years there is an election and a new group of decision-makers must be educated.

The geographic fact that is Ontario presents some obstacles as well. Ontario is huge; it stretches 1,000 miles east to west, and 1,000 miles north to south. Its area is almost equal to that of France, Germany and Italy combined. Most of its 7 million people live in a narrow band just north of the United States border. This is the most prosperous part of Ontario and it is here that resources and expertise are concentrated, although needs are not. They are found throughout the province.

We are a bilingual nation, but only some of our materials are available in French. And what of the other 68 ethnic groups in the province? Our cities now contain large groups of people from other countries where different attitudes towards play and the use of public open space prevailed. Established public institutions have not yet come to grips with how to serve these sections of our society, but their needs are no less real.

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[1] See Polly Hill, "Orchestrating Action for Children's Opportunities for Play" in this report.

Given our circumstances in Ontario, it is my firm conviction that without the active participation of the senior level of government, that is to say the provincial government, we will be unable to make much progress in how we as a society manage urban space in the interest of children. Our geography, size and regional disparities make this involvement mandatory, but it should happen as a partnership with appropriate interest groups.

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ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH

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Protecting and improving public health, prolonging life, and extending years of productivity are important social policy goals for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. General Secretary of the Communist Party L.I. Breznev said, speaking at the XXVth Party Congress, "There is no more important social task than the task of safeguarding the Soviet people's health."

Thus, health research becomes of great importance. Major subjects for research studies are the health of groups of people and the environmental factors influencing it. The results of these investigations are necessary, both for scientifically-grounded planning of preventive and health-building measures and for estimating their effectiveness. Understanding patterns of changes in people's health under the complex influences of various environmental factors will enable predictions that in turn will offer opportunities for correcting appropriate aspects of national economic plans.

There are two general trends in studying public health:

1. generalizing public health data obtained by practitioners in the process of their everyday activities and generalizing results of the mass investigations, or screenings, which they carry out;
2. investigating relatively small but representative groups by means of both clinical and laboratory methods.

The results of a great number of research projects have laid the groundwork for legislation embodying norms and recommendations for public health bodies aimed at protecting and strengthening the Soviet people's health. Nowadays, the most important task of the science of hygiene is to determine regularities in both immediate and long-term changes in people's health.

New tasks, as well as changes in socioeconomic conditions, require the development of systematic approaches to the study of the role of environmental factors in the formation of changes in the population's health. Such studies are based on statistical observations. The methods for collecting data must be appropriate to the aim of the investigation, and the indices selected for study should adequately characterize the influence of environmental factors on the health of the population.

As a rule, in determining the influence of a particular environmental factor, the subjects for observation are chosen according to the principle of maximum exposure to the factor under study. With this method, quantitative dependence of the isolated environmental factor's influence is determined (the dependent effect).

There is no need for such selection in studying the complex influence of environmental factors. On the contrary, population groups under investigation should be fully described over the course of a long period of time. This last aspect is of particular importance, as the investigations under discussion can only be dynamic (longitudinal or semilongitudinal). Women and children are considered the most acceptable contingent for determining quantitative characteristics of interaction between community and environment. The study of these groups allows us to determine fairly accurately the prospects of development as a whole of that population to which the groups belong.

Annual medical examinations are of great importance in assessing children's health. Nowadays, their results are used both to reveal persons in need of treatment and to plan the network of treatment facilities. To use the results of these examinations for studying the influences of environmental factors on the health of the population, it is necessary to create a systematic method of carrying them out. A description of each cohort examined, using a common scheme, must also be compulsory.

Of late, a number of authors (N.A. Vinogradov, V. Georgievskij, A.M. Merkov, L.E. Poljakov, and others) have offered various more complex techniques for the estimation of public health, based chiefly on the selection of health criteria characteristic of different population groups (age, sex, profession, and the like). Methods of complex evaluation of incidence rates within the population are proposed with the aid of:

1. evaluation tables, assessing indices by means of rank-ordering, and
2. algorithms of complex probability evaluation of the basic indices of incidence, most important classes, groups and forms of disease, based on their comparison by levels (A.M. Merkov and L.E. Poljakov).

Of great importance are methods of complex evaluation of the health indices, not of individuals, but of whole populations. One of the systematic methods permitting this type of evaluation is a division into categories, grouping people with the same health condition and capacity for work.

The principle of population grouping from the point of view of medicine and public health is not new and is used in a number of countries. Most often, the classification is derived from the social setting. Examples are classifications used when enrolling army recruits and groupings based on suitability for athletic activities. In the USSR, there are three such groups used in the schools: basic, preparatory and special. In France, there are four such groups, whose descriptions are contained in their very

names: those who are fit, able and are admitted; those needing observation and apparently a lighter load; those who are temporarily unfit; and those who are wholly unfit.

There also exist classifications which do not pursue practical aims, and which are based on the principle of the presence and the seriousness of illness (Rozhdero, according to P.V. Kolarov). For children of school age, groupings have been proposed which reflect chiefly the level of need for medical observation and aid. The following official classification is used in the German Democratic Republic:

Group 1: In this group are children whose development corresponds to their age, and who show good or average progress and normal behavior.

Group 2: This group is divided into two sub-groups:
a) those children who require short-term special medical attention;
b) children who need prolonged attention by medical specialists, but who can nonetheless attend public school.

Group 3: In this group are children with physical and psychic disturbances which prevent training in regular public schools (M. Broynung).

This scheme, though useful, nevertheless cannot be considered wholly a scheme of health evaluation, since Group 2 is formed to a significant extent not from medical but from social and pedagogical evidence: into it enter, among others, socially neglected children and poor students.

The International Children's Centre recommends the following classification:

1. Those who feel well
2. Those who are healthy
3. Those who are slightly ill
4. Those who are convalescing
5. Those who are ill

This classification is not practical and does not take into account either the functional capabilities of both healthy and sick children or the extent of their social fitness.

The Research Institute for Child and Adolescent Hygiene of the Soviet Ministry of Public Health is developing methods and principles for studying children's health with respect to environmental factors. As a result of collective creative activity, a scheme of grouping children according to their health was developed which can characterize groups of children from the point of view of their need for medical attention and their capacity for working. According to this scheme, there are five groups:

Group 1 includes normal children without chronic diseases, with normal functional indices of the systems under study, and normal physical development.

Group 2 includes healthy children who have some morpho-functional deviations. Included are those with postural defects, mild myopia, deviations in physical development not secondary to endocrinopathy, and cosmetic defects which do not prevent them from social activity (for example, absence of fingers). Also included are normal children whose health is at risk due to either their physical abnormalities or to their living conditions and who thus demand increased medical and pedagogical attention (such as children under care for rheumatic diseases, tuberculosis, or neuro-psychiatric illness), and children who tire easily secondary to dietary disturbances. In addition, children who suffer from headaches or who are ill more than four times a year are included in this group.

Group 3 includes children with chronic diseases in remission, for example, controlled rheumatic diseases, uncomplicated chronic tonsillitis, and chronic pyelonephritis or cholecystitis.

Group 4 includes those who have chronic diseases which are in an active phase and under treatment, but who are without significant disturbance in well-being and continue to attend regular public schools and other children's institutions.

Group 5 includes children with chronic diseases not responding to treatment. Children in this group are almost never included in mass medical screening, as they are usually unable to attend regular schools at any level.

The advantage of this system lies in the fact that assigning a child to a particular group characterizes the degree of his or her capacity for work; having a group of children under observation makes it possible to characterize the degree of capacity for work of the group as a whole. Conventional methods of categorization present uncoordinated information about each aspect of health separately, without taking into account their combination. They usually offer general incidence rates, the prevalence of specific problems, and the frequency of deviations in, for example, physical growth. In contrast, the proposed system presents the characteristics of child health in an integrated way: all criteria are taken into consideration in every group.

This system can be used to determine patterns of changes in people's health under the influence of environmental factors. We can construct a mathematical model which will allow us to state this relationship by applying demographic statistics to calculate the probability that certain phenomena will appear, leading to the transfer of certain populations from one health group to another, and enabling us to calculate prospective life span. The advantage of applying this method lies in the fact that probability can be determined by alternative indices which complement each other (psychological and biochemical, for example), while conventional measurements do not allow this option. That is why we consider the above-described method of classification one of the real ways of solving the problem of predicting changes in people's health under the influence of environmental factors.

Experience shows that the dynamics of the process whereby health problems develop in groups can be, as a rule, expressed by means of a diagram that shows the close interaction of phenomena which are components of people's health formation process and which, in its character, is not unlike the curve of age mortality. Studying diagrams for a series of generations could indicate relationships between health and environmental conditions. Patterns that develop can show remission or relapse of illnesses, as well as whether host defences and adaptations are sufficient or insufficient.

This method is quite discriminating, and can be applied in studies of how environmental factors influence health. It can be used to create an ideal population model from the point of view of public health. Underlying this method is the principle that human characteristics, like natural ones, develop to a certain extent according to the principles of evolution, and the perservation through a number of generations of a particular characteristic of a population can indicate the adaptation of these generations to environmental factors. It is necessary to note that investigations of this kind cannot claim to be valid when applied on a global basis. The best application seems to be the regional level. The type of area suitable for the sort of analysis described here is one in which a given environmental factor's (or factors') presence and intensity of effect can be identified.

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PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE CHILDREN OF BANGLADESH

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* I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Innas Ali, Member, Planning Commission; to Major General Fazlur Rahman Al-Mamoon, Secretary, Ministry of Public Works and Urban Development; and to Mr. A.C. Das, Director of Urban Development, Ministry of Public Works and Urban Development, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, for their valuable assistance, suggestions and contributions in enabling me to prepare this paper and attend the symposium.

INTRODUCTION

The International Year of the Child represented an attempt by the United Nations to encourage the governments of its members, as well as organizations and people all over the world, to focus attention on particular issues and problems relating to children.

Children are international. Stronger links among all the children of the world need to be forged. Actions to enhance the welfare of children, both economic and sociopolitical, have accelerated in the recent past. In spite of all international efforts, an alarmingly large number of children, especially in developing countries like Bangladesh, are still deprived of basic needs of life.

Proposals and plans should be based on accurate information. At the very outset, I want to mention that statistics and data available in Bangladesh are very limited, especially concerning children. I have used the most recent data we have, the Bangladesh population census report for 1974. In consequence, many of the figures cited may well be much lower than had figures for 1979 been available.

This paper should have been based on facts and figures obtained by means of a physical survey of all the urban areas of Bangladesh. Since such a survey has not been made, it has been necessary to extrapolate from international publications and references in light of conditions in Bangladesh.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, classified as a developing country, is one of the poorest nations in the world, with a per capita gross national product of little more than US $100. The country of 80 million, covering an area of

55,598 square miles, has an average population density of 1,438 per square mile. Only about 8.8% of the population lives in urban areas, but these are thickly populated; with the high rate of migration from rural areas, caused by people's desire for jobs and the amenities of modern living, the urban land is constantly under pressure. The literacy rate is 20%, and less than 3% of the urban population can be classified as affluent. The remaining 97% consists of low and middle income groups; our task is to orient both our resources and thinking to the needs of the 97%.[1]

Major efforts of the government are devoted to improving the lot of the people living in the rural areas, who are mostly engaged in agriculture. Urban areas of Bangladesh have increased from 5.19% in 1961 to 8.8% in 1974. Bangladesh thus remains an essentially rural country; more than 91% of her inhabitants live in villages. Apart from Nepal (with 4% urban population), Bangladesh has the lowest degree of urbanization in the region.[2]

The percentage of children up to 14 years of age is very high in the third world. In effect, a considerable percentage of children now in the educational systems of the third world countries will never enter the job market or will stay there for only a limited period. By 1985, it is projected that the total number of the world's children under the age of 14 will increase by about 450 million, of whom 400 million will be in the less developed regions.

The child population of the urban areas of Bangladesh is about 2.3 million, which is about 33% of the total urban population of the country.[3] By 1985, it is projected to be 3 million.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS IN BANGLADESH

Children are the backbone of a nation. Today's children are the citizens of tomorrow. The future of a country largely depends on developmental strategy appropriately formulated to help children grow to become useful adults. Interference with the sound growth of our children amounts to cutting the very roots of the social structure. It is for the sake of urban children, now and in the future, and to relieve past neglect, that developing countries like Bangladesh need to give attention to land use in their urban areas. In planning, provision should be made for housing and recreational facilities, schools, libraries and health clinics, as well as special facilities for disadvantaged groups of children.

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1 UN Demographic Year Book, 1974.

2 UNICEF Publication Bangladesh, 1979. Asia 1979 Year Book, Far Eastern Review.

3 Bangladesh Population Census Report, 1974.

1. Housing and Recreational Facilities

Housing is a universal problem in developing countries; its shortage is most acute in the cities. Housing conditions in the cities have become significantly worse in most of the developing countries during the course of the past ten years. The most important reasons are rapid population growth, migration of rural population to the cities, and a stagnation in the rate of increase of national production directly affecting the housing construction sector. Only generalized, too scanty, housing data are available for the cities of Bangladesh. Although it is known that existing housing conditions in the private sector are far from satisfactory and that a sizeable number of urban households have hardly any access to properly-serviced shelter, the situation in Bangladesh is yet to reach an intolerable limit. Nevertheless, thousands in the cities live in slums and squatter settlements in shacks built of waste materials and devoid of basic utilities and services. The children are the victims of this situation. Because of high population density and lack of hygienic conditions, sanitation services and pure water, slum children suffer from various types of infectious diseases common in tropical countries. As a remedy, it may be suggested that these slums should be upgraded and if possible cleared in phases and the residents provided with minimum utilities and services or, alternatively, that cities be rehabilitated in a planned manner.

Because of increasing population in urban areas, and the need for providing housing within the land limitation in the city, many countries are choosing to build multi-storied apartment houses. Singapore, a country of 220 square miles with a population of 2.5 million, has successfully provided housing units through her public housing programme to 75% of the total population, and is planning to provide the same to 80% by 1980. To do so, she has constructed tower blocks of housing, because of the limited amount of land available. Do such tower blocks for housing adversely affect children or not? Concentrating large numbers of children in multi-storied housing complexes may cause social problems. Parents who live on the upper floors of such tower blocks are generally less able to supervise their children. Children who live in such settings are prone to traffic accidents, as in most of the developing countries there exists no traffic discipline as such.

However, the concept of multi-storied apartment houses perhaps cannot be altogether ignored, primarily because of land constraint in the cities and growing demand for more housing. In planning such tower blocks for housing, special care should be taken so that the interests of the children do not suffer; adequate provision must be made for their safety and security.

In Bangladesh, playgrounds, parks, open spaces and other recreational facilities are very meagre. It is necessary that this aspect of land use in urban areas be given high priority; rigid provision in the form of percentage of urban land utilization should be made for these purposes.

2. Schools

Due to economic considerations, problems from land constraint in the urban areas, and lack of proper land management and control policy,

the schools in Bangladesh have been located haphazardly, with little concern for children's convenience. In the urban areas of Bangladesh, about half of the children between the ages of 10 and 14 are in schools, as is about one third of the age group 5 to 9.[4] Such low attendance can be explained by the fact that Bangladesh inherited an educational system from the colonial period, has relatively little experience in dealing with mass education, has a rapid urban population growth, and, above all, expenditure for education is significantly low - only 10-15 percent of the national budget.

Recent introduction of universal primary education in the country will strike at the roots of one of the basic causes of under-development, illiteracy. The principal obstacles, however, are the absence of an organizational structure and lack of funds. The National Education Advisory Council, in its interim report (January 1979), proposed a community approach whereby residents would contribute to the functioning of the schools in each locality. Arranging school facilities on a self-help basis will give citizens a greater sense of belonging to these institutions.

3. Libraries

Folk tales and short stories used to interest the children of a few decades back; today's children are also eager to read modern fiction, science magazines and the like, which are generally imported and sold at high prices in our country. The high price of books puts them beyond the reach of the common children of Bangladesh and emphasizes the need for establishing libraries where books can be made available to them. One such library exists in the Children's Academy at Dacca; other cities offer children only small annexes in the public libraries.

4. Health Clinics

"A healthy child, a sure future". Eighty percent of the world's children (1,220 million) live in developing countries, a majority of them in environments characterized by malnutrition, infections, lack of safe water and sanitation, and inadequate health care. This perpetuates a vicious cycle of one unhealthy generation leading to the next.

The infant mortality rate in Bangladesh is eight times higher than that in the developed countries. This high rate is largely due to the fact that four out of every five children in Bangladesh have some form of worm infestation, one child in ten under five years of age contracts tetanus; and measles and tuberculosis affect large numbers of children each year. The incidence of child blindness is also high (about 17,000 cases annually).

The prime cause of illness in Bangladesh is polluted water; more than half of the diseases affecting children are water-borne. Lack of sanitation and primary health services also are responsible for such high numbers of diseased children in Bangladesh.

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[4] Bangladesh Population Census Report, 1974.

Malnutrition is one of the major health problems in developing countries like Bangladesh. This is not primarily related to physical characteristics of the environment but to the social, economic and technological deficiencies of the particular area. Children, as they are in a stage of active growth and development, require proportionately greater quantities of nutrients than adults, and are more prone to the adverse effects of nutritional deficiencies.

In many developing countries, the availability of medical facilities in urban areas is far less than what is required. The poorer the country is, the lower the rate of hospital beds to population and the higher the number of deaths attributed to undiagnosed and untreated conditions.

Existing child care facilities in Bangladesh are too meagre. There is only one children's hospital in Dacca; it started functioning just about 3 years ago. Elsewhere, wards for children are attached to district and subdivisional hospitals. Large-scale efforts are required to establish more children's hospitals, and also to start a number of child clinics in every town. Pure drinking water is essential as well.

The World Health Organization has already created a sociopolitical climate of urgency in regard to children's needs. The foundation for continuing systematic action focusing on the health and well-being of the child, especially in the developing countries, has been laid. What is needed is a "radical new approach" based on a just distribution of health resources, mobilization of national and international resources, imaginative use of traditional medicines, and development of appropriate health technology relevant to local needs.

5. Institutions for Disadvantaged Children

The term "disadvantaged" is used to refer to those suffering from serious economic, physical, social and mental problems. Disadvantaged children include children of the unemployed and under-employed, landless and destitute; victims of natural disasters (such as cyclones and floods) and other disasters (such as wars and social disturbances of various kinds); physically handicapped children, such as the blind, the deaf and the crippled; socially handicapped children, such as orphans and beggars; and mentally handicapped children.

Statistics for the numbers of children in different "disadvantaged" groups are not readily available. Some for 1974, however, are available. For example, among children nine years of age and under, 533,620 were totally blind, 64,500 were deaf, and 49,990 were crippled.

Although there are some orphanages, institutions for deaf children and homes for vagrants, the existing facilities for handicapped children are very limited in Bangladesh. More land needs to be allocated for developing appropriate institutions in the urban areas.

PRIORITIES, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. Population Control

In Bangladesh, where poverty is endemic and population is increasing fast, economic growth, employment generation and population control must be emphasized.

Population growth is a menace in any developing country. In Bangladesh, about 10,000 babies are born every day. This unabated growth is causing further disaster to children already undernourished and ill-clad. Plans made for children become impossible to carry out as the resources mobilized fall short of requirements. If this growth continues uncontrolled, no amount of endeavor, either national or international, to improve the condition of children will serve the purpose. The government of Bangladesh is fully cognizant of the situation and, in consequence, has identified this problem as the country's most serious.

Bangladesh has one of the highest population growth rates in the region. With population rising at 2.8% per year, the number of people in the country may double by the end of this century. The government, however, has set the ambitious target of reducing the growth rate to 2% per year by 1980, and achieving an average growth rate of 1.5% over the whole period until the year 2000. Even if Bangladesh succeeds in achieving zero population growth, the population is expected to exceed 120 million by the end of the century. With this increase in population, if urbanization maintains the present rate, the projected urban population is expected to be about 18 million by the year 2000, of which 10 million will be children.

A number of measures have recently been taken to control population growth. Family planning clinics have been established in all the urban areas, and motivation work is done to educate the adult population so that they can derive benefit from the various modern techniques of birth control. The measures for solving this problem have succeeded to the extent that the birth rate in the urban areas of Bangladesh has decreased to a considerable degree during the recent past. City dwellers now believe in the popular slogan "Two children are enough". Efforts need to be extended to the rural areas also if the interests of the children in the urban areas are to be safeguarded.

2. Planning Framework

Bangladesh is a rural nation; therefore priority has been assigned to agriculture and rural development. Urban areas, therefore, are left with a small share of the budget allocation; the children of the urban areas do not receive the attention they need. On the other hand, it is important to note that there already exists a great disparity between the urban and rural population and also between the rich and poor urban population. Nothing should be done which further widens this gap and creates more imbalance in the society. Too much attention to the children of the urban areas in the form of providing them more facilities may complicate the situation. Our urban society is constantly under a push from the rural population, and more disequilibrium should be carefully avoided.

The lives of our children in the low income groups in Bangladesh are based on deeply-rooted traditions, beliefs and practices that mold them to fit into the long-established pattern of existence. Children of our country, in the past, used to derive inspiration and immense benefit from nature. Their schools were in the open sky. Any space available was a playground. Recreational facilities were all traditional, with indigenous homemade equipment. Children's thinking was clear, without any conflict and contradiction. In the urban areas, these children are now confronted with an array of bewildering new concepts that encroach on their lives and cause them to question much that they had always accepted as facts of life. These concepts are totally alien to their social values and contradictory to the fabric of our social system. City children in Bangladesh today are confused, as they cannot live in new, modern ways for economic reasons, yet they cannot practice traditional ways in urban areas.

With the development of technology and infiltration of alien culture in our urban society, our traditional values are gradually dying out. If we, instead, combine our approaches by revitalizing the old traditional methods while at the same time making available selected modern facilities, we can meet all our needs within the limits of our resources.

In order to extend benefits to urban children from limited resources in the developing countries, coordinated planning is necessary. The need for protecting the interests of children has not yet been realized in most of the developing countries. Unless planning is taken to be a part of administration and a responsibility of the government, it may be difficult to safeguard the needs of children in planning land use.

Three tools available for shaping the pattern of land use in cities are regulation, taxation and public acquisition of land. Regulation of the use of land is not a new thing; there were restrictions imposed even in the cities of ancient Babylonia. Regulation has not, however, proved to be the master-key to the solution of the problems for improving the urban environment. In developing countries, regulation is virtually a total failure as a policy, since governments often are unable to enforce restrictions, simply because they lack enforcement machinery.

Taxation can be a potent and versatile instrument. For example, it is a useful device for preventing land speculation. Most of the developing countries, however, do not tax land to any significant extent, in order to avoid overburdening its owners. Disillusioned about what can be accomplished by regulation or by taxation, most countries have decided that they must take a direct hand. Public acquisition can help mitigate some of the problems brought about by private ownership of land. Even where the land is publicly owned, however, its use is conditioned by the pressure of market and public opinion.

It is important to remember as well that all responsibility need not fall to the government. Voluntary organizations which develop facilities for children can lift a considerable portion of the burden from the government.

3. Action by Bangladesh

The nation is facing an enormous challenge against the backdrop of her social and economic condition. Fortunately, the present government recognizes that unless rapid and concrete advances are made in the economic and social sector, the future will remain unstable and the prospects bleak for children and for the whole nation.

Bangladesh has initiated several new policies designed to launch a development plan. A two-year interim plan was formulated with the launching of the second five-year plan expected in July, 1980. A 20-year plan is under preparation; its objectives are to solve the food shortage, check population, and control and remove unemployment. During the International Year of the Child, the government also established a national council to deal with children's health, nutrition and education.

No doubt, the task for the years to come is a stupendous one and calls for nationwide awareness and preparation. Bangladesh is a poor nation but she is a determined nation, with the unique heritage of a war of liberation in her recent past. She may lack resources, but she is blessed with determined leadership and plenty of inexpensive manpower.

I urge you to extend your helping hands in combating this gigantic problem. I began by saying that children are international: people all over the world have a definite responsibility towards them.

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THE CHILD AND THE ENVIRONMENT: AN AGENDA FOR TOMORROW

by Julibel C. Alegre

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All planning must necessarily be concerned with the future. Logically, the argument follows that planning which tries to shape the future should have a special concern for those who will spend the greater portion of their lives within this timeframe. While planning is or should be concerned with all people, focusing on children and youth does not necessarily amount to being unduly restrictive.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL INFLUENCES

In the past, failures in the development efforts of underdeveloped societies were explained away by the lack of financial resources, or the absence of political will, or the inadequacy of technological capability. But the familiar analysis conceals the fact that it derives from a particular concept of development and a development model that are tied to western experience (Marcos, 1976). The knotty question arises as to what the objectives of urban planning should be. Should planners provide what the people want, which may not necessarily be good for them, or should they impose their preferences on them?

It is universally accepted that culture has a way of shaping an individual's pattern of behavior, and by inference, his preferences. By way of illustration, something must be said about what sociologists have observed as the case with which the Filipino accepts crowding in housing - it seems that it would take a lot to make him feel he cannot stand the press of humanity any longer. This approach to space has been traced to what has been termed a "horror vacui culture" or the uneasiness at empty spaces. Traditional Philippine painting reflects this as does our jeepney modern rococo decor. Interior decorators comment on it, and builders point to the homeowner's preference for a house covering almost the entire lot on which it stands (Hollnsteiner, 1969).

It has been observed that the Filipino child's space requirements are not very great. The typical Filipino house usually has one room which serves as living area during the day and bedroom at night. The whole family characteristically sleeps under one mosquito net, and in the morning, the single mat which had served as bed during the night is rolled up so that the space which it occupied can be used for another purpose. Although houses for the more affluent may have two or three bedrooms, it is not unusual to find that the children in most of these homes prefer to sleep with their parents in the master bedroom, a practice which is easily tolerated and taken

as a matter of course in the household. Had the architects of these large houses been more sensitive and perceptive to such common practices, the spaces allocated to those empty bedrooms could have been put to better use.

There are some decidedly positive elements to this kind of influence which bear upon the urban child. The geographic and social closeness of relationships, for example, requires the Filipino child to learn very early in life that he must be vigilant to the temperament of others and seek above all to minimize stress. Studies reveal that the Filipino culture's emphasis on the importance of interpersonal relationships is internalized by the Filipino child. Our society favors the informal experiences of the extended kin group and the neighborhood as means of socializing the child. These closely-knit collateral relationships give the child a sense of belonging and security. They fill the need for a pattern of living congenial to the physical demands of the environment, which perhaps explains the comparatively low rate of neurotic breakdowns and anxiety in our society vis-à-vis our western counterparts.

THE VOICE OF THE CHILD

Children do not vote. They are not a political constituency. Their problems usually rate low priority in the national agenda. When they do appear occasionally, they constitute mere "social appendices" rather than an integral part of the plan for economic and social development. And yet, as human resources, children and youth are essential for development. They are, with their incipient capacity to produce, what might be called "human investments". As such, in the economics of planning, they cannot be dismissed as simple consumers.

One way to address the problem of planning for children and youth is to consider whether the needs of children should be treated as an individual planning sector or whether different aspects of planning which affect children should be handled through different sectors. In operational terms, it would be almost impossible to isolate children and to design a sectoral programme for their development (Singer, 1966). According to the concept of planning for children and youth as an integral feature of national development planning, children and youth do not become a new sector of planning and administration. Instead, attention is focused on children and youth in terms of the whole child, as a coordinated point of concentration of many functional programmes; some examples include education, health services, clothing and housing supply, employment, welfare and other social services, and multinational activities (Reubens, 1967).

On December 10, 1974, on the occasion of Human Rights Day, our president, His Excellency Ferdinand E. Marcos, issued a Presidential Decree creating a Child and Youth Welfare Code, which now has the force of law in the Philippines. The new code regards the child as a complete person and defines the fundamental rights pertaining to every aspect of his being. Its first principle declares, "The child is one of the most important assets of the nation. Every effort should therefore be exerted to promote his welfare and enhance his opportunities for a useful and happy life."

Two years later, on December 10, 1976, the President proclaimed the nationwide observance of the Decade of the Filipino Child for the years 1977 to 1987. The supporting activities, coordinated by the Council for the Welfare of Children, culminated in the launching of a comprehensive, integrated national plan of action for the development of children and youth for the decade. The basic objective of this ten-year plan is to transform within that programme period the range of services and assistance necessary to children's development. Its principal strategy is to institute an integrated system of services, incorporating old as well as new services.

Time and again it has been said that those who have less in life should have more in law. This adage is true of the child. Moreover, legal rights must necessarily be transformed into operational services in order to be meaningful. The Philippines has long advocated a total approach to the child. We are consequently in the process of developing an integrated social welfare programme which is complemented by a cultural promotion programme.

In creating the environment wherein our children will live and play day to day, our underlying commitment should be directed to the goal that they become self-actualizing, self-reliant and responsible members of society. The quality of their environment will help determine the quality of their achievement.

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OF, BY AND FOR CHILDREN:
A CYBERNETIC ORGANIZATION FOR MANAGING URBAN SPACE

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A MODEL FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL

The specific objective of this paper is to offer a synthesis focusing on a model for the development of operational policy at many levels of societal decision-making, a model that may be equally applicable for a family, a multi-family housing development, a neighborhood, a system of neighborhoods, a community, a city, a region or a state. It is hoped that this model will be of use to adults currently involved in child-environment planning, and that it will also provide a process that will encourage the active and effective involvement of additional adults, parents and caretakers of the children themselves.

Our intent is the full participation of all, children and adults, laypersons and academics, in the planning and management of the urban environment - participation that will ensure that the full range of people requirements are met in the city, not just the requirements of one user group, or of a few user groups. To reach the goal of working together toward common goals, we present a model for optimal participatory organization and planning, for optimal resource allocation, and for optimal resource utilization.

It is easy enough to find fault with the institutions and structures that we already have which purport to serve children. Perhaps if we understand why they do not do the job expected of them, we can move beyond them to develop systems that do. In our opinion, current structures, such as government bureaucracies, developed out of needs and motivations from the past. They were, historically, perhaps appropriate; at one time, many had much to offer, but they are not effective any more.

Perception of these systems, moreover, exacerbates the problem. In conceptualizing them, we construct models of them in which we, the modellers, are part of the systems being modelled. If our perception is inadequate, so is our representation. The danger is that, first of all, the models no longer explain behavior, and second, the modellers think they should (Bear, 1975).

In contrast, we propose the alternative of developing a model for the organization and management of complex social issues or complex social systems. To do so, we must ground ourselves in the theoretical and operational framework of general systems theory and cybernetics.

GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY AND CYBERNETICS

Directions provided by general systems theory and cybernetics offer a cognitive framework that allows the understanding, explanation and management of complex systems, since they allow for both analysis and synthesis in system terms, rather than the more traditional and mechanistic analytic approach whereby problems or issues are fragmented and simplified to allow the use of analytic tools. As we well know, the latter approach has proven limited and unsatisfactory - we have addressed various truncated social ills, but the general social malaise has been aggravated. Systems theory provides us with some general principles or theories regarding systems, including guidelines for the development and management of viable living systems such as organizations. These principles are applicable at all levels of systems from the cell, to the organ, to the human, to the group, to the organization, to the community, the city, the state, the nation, or any complex of nations or states. Systems theory also provides a means for adequately modelling all aspects of a complex system including its interaction with its environment. Accordingly, issues dealt with as systems are dealt with holistically. The systems approach, furthermore, allows for the understanding of various levels of systems in terms of supra-system, system, sub-system, sub-sub-system, and so on. In consequence, after we have identified the various levels of decision-making, or planning, or management that we are likely to encounter, we will be able to apply this information.

What does systems theory lead us to propose for an organization for managing urban space in the interest of children? It will have the characteristics common to large viable systems. We want the system to survive. To do so, it must self-regulate and self-organize. It must also adapt to changes in its internal and external environments. To be viable, then, our cybernetic system must be able to learn. Learning, according to the principles of cybernetic organization, can be studied in terms of multiple feedback loops. Finally, we must manage the system appropriately.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS: THE CHILDREN'S SYSTEM

How can we be certain that the organization we propose will not meet the same fate as have the traditional organizations? We have developed proposals for an alternative organizational structure that follow the laws for viable systems. We call the organizational structure that we are presenting the Children's System. It is based on the five-tier functional logic found in natural neurologies such as the workings of the human brain and the nervous system - a very effective control system (Figure 1, Beer, 1972). The model is valuable in that it clarifies how an organization really could work, as distinct from how it really works or the way it allegedly works, so that it may be made more effective. A schematic diagram of the organizational model is presented in Figure 2.

FIGURE 1

5 TIER LOGIC OF THE HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM

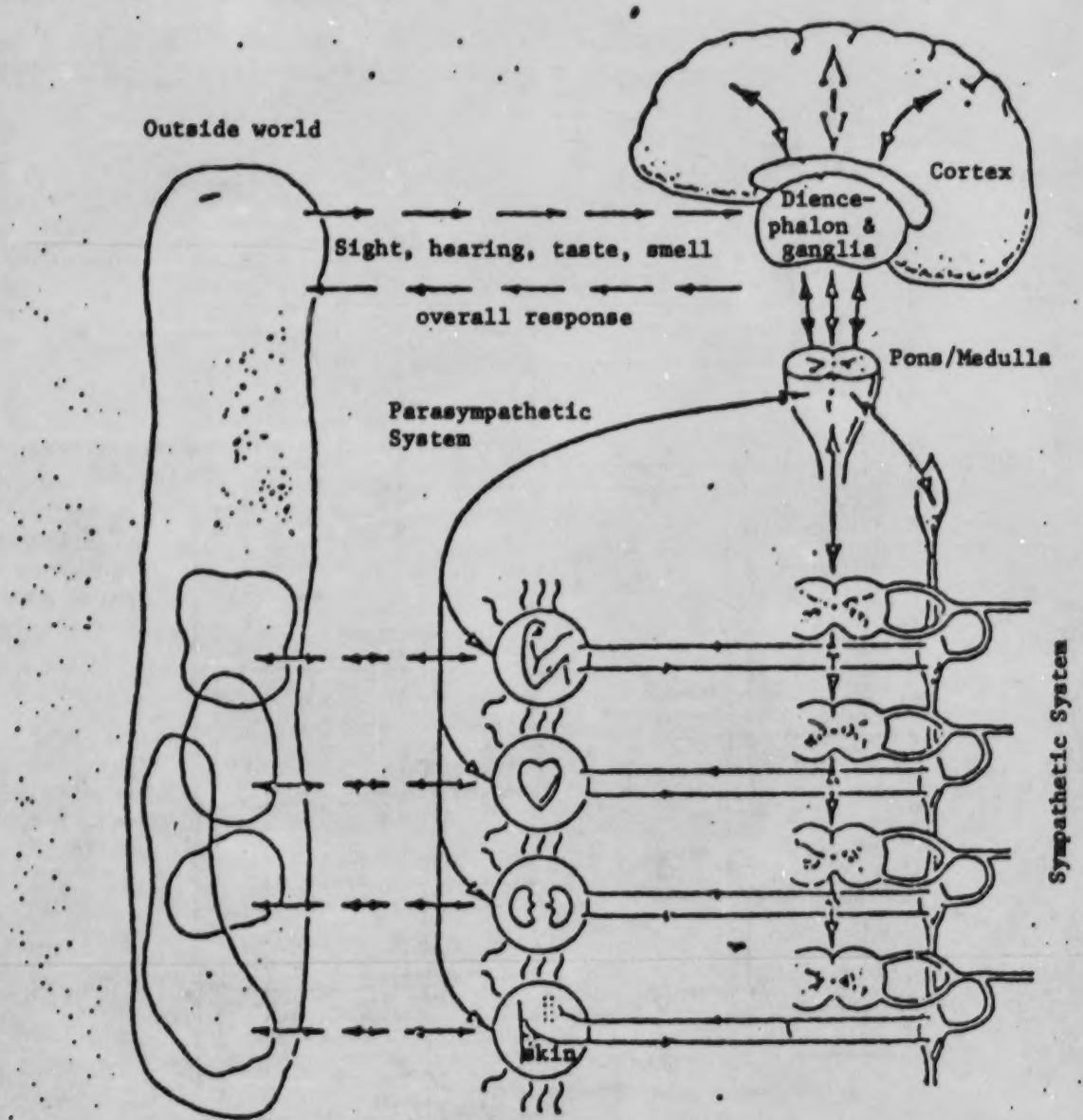
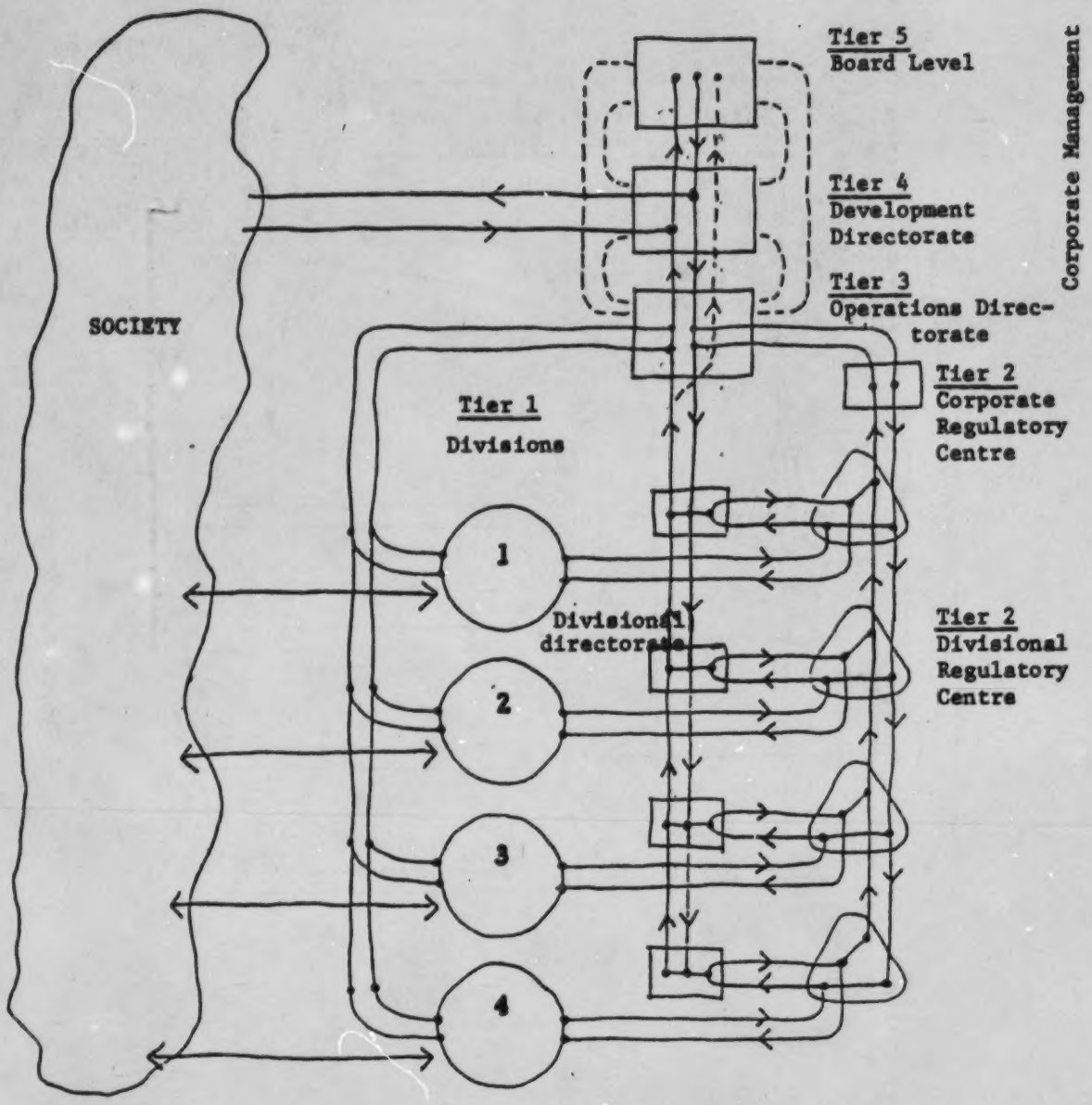


Figure 2

Control Function Analogy



An appropriate model for any workable organization, this model details the levels of control that can be found in all viable systems. Following is a brief summary of the five tiers of control and their interactions, with a first approximation of application at the level of urban services. Another approximation of application at the national level will follow. These levels were selected as a means of providing some potentially useful examples of possible applications. Other levels and combination of levels ought to be explored and simulated as well.

Tier One consists of Divisions. Each division has control over local events, activities and processes. Divisions are relatively autonomous operating units which take independent actions with respect to their local environments. However, they must operate within the coordinating framework of Tier Two and submit to the autonomic control of Tier Three. (Autonomic control is control which "takes a basically operational system and a basic set of instructions for granted, and then proceeds to keep what is happening in balance" - Beer, 1972). Each division has divisional directors who assume the responsibility for programming, planning by given objectives, and normative planning. The responsibilities of control at Tier One level are the following:

1. Set initial plans;
2. Constantly update plans on the central command axis with Tier Two;
3. Immediately recognize actual state.

Application at the level of urban services might include the divisions as neighborhood organizations with the two tasks of identifying needs for and delivering services at the local level. Staffing would include children; depending on the services delivered, the children would be more or less involved in active decision-making.

Tier Two consists of the Two-Division Regulatory Centres. These centres carry out those communications necessary for coordination between divisions. Regulatory centres are both ad hoc and formal groups of division directors and advisors from the Operations Directorate (Tier 3). They seek coordination and cooperation among divisions, thereby performing a balancing function for the total organizational system. We envision a typical centre as staffed by an informal group of division directors who, in accordance with their normal duties, generate performance data for their divisions, compare actions among divisions, and may attempt to coordinate actions among divisions through formal, contractual arrangements.

One of the Tier Two centres, the Corporate Regulatory Centre, is a formal committee of division directors, generally governed by a chairperson. It evaluates the performance of the divisions according to their established goals. It also formally settles disputes, by seeking the advice of the Operations Directorate at Tier Three, by invoking the command authority to the Board at Tier Five, or by combining both of these options.

When we apply this model to an urban setting, we see the divisional directors as elected or otherwise delegated members of the divisions, including children. Directors would work cooperatively to ascertain that all neighborhood services are satisfactorily delivered, avoid duplication, deal with neighborhood level resource allocation, and the like. This second tier is a group level phenomenon achieved by interaction between divisional workers. Activities would be accomplished by informal interactions among neighborhood divisions and by formal urban policies of the city in question.

At Tier Three we have the Operations Directorate. Here we find the interface between local operations and corporate or system-wide centres. The third tier controls the down-bound signals and filters the up-bound. It oversees all lower level functions, ensuring that they work and interact effectively so that they stay within the constraints necessary for the survival of the system as a whole. Simultaneously, the third layer has the task of providing thresholds: they pass problems worthy of top decision attention onward, while being careful not to overload the upstream circuits with trivia. The Operations Directorate achieves autonomic control for total organizational operations. It governs the internal stability of the system and optimizes the operations. It has a more comprehensive understanding of the total operations of the divisions by virtue of information input from Tier Four. It can arouse Tier Five to any critical operational problem whose resolution requires authority and information.

At Tier Three, we are dealing with operations at the whole urban scale. (We assume that an organizational structure that moves directly from the neighborhood to the urban level was deemed desirable. An alternative option involves developing additional intermediary levels, such as boroughs; if this or another scheme were adopted, Tiers Three, Four and Five would be located at this next appropriate higher level.) The Operations Directorate consists of delegated Division members (including children) with the specific Tier Three functional task. The Operations Directorate also has an advisory group at its disposal. These advisors could be functional specialists, that is, people (adults and children) who have some specific services or information to offer to the divisions. They might be, for example, specialists in housing requirements, daycare, playgrounds, zoning and other specific codes, financing, accounting, management. Optimization may be enhanced if some of the advisors are members of the Operations Directorate.

Tier Four consists of the Development Directorate. Here is found the sensory apparatus for the organization as an entity. This is the final point of information preparation about both internal operations and the environment of the system. The Development Directorate deals with policy and planning for the whole system; it conducts metasystematic modelling of the alternative future states of the system, it tries to predict and create the future of the system, and it develops alternative models of the system for the Board (Tier Five) to consider. It also has a direct communication link with the environment. This link both provides the Operational Directorate and the Board with greater appreciation of the organization in its setting and can arouse System Five about any critical policy issue or problem arising in the environment which might affect the future of the total organizational system. Tier Four, at the urban scale, deals essentially with the external world and with the future of the whole system.

Tier Five consists of The Board. This system contains the corporate or system-wide deciders. It makes major policy decisions about the future states of the organizational system. It is primarily concerned with determining the best possible organizational structure for the future as offered in the models provided by the Development Directorate. It has the capacity to understand the total operations of the system; it evaluates these operations in terms of existing and future policies and plans.

If we were to apply this schematic to an individual operating a machine, we would find organ level phenomena working to coordinate the individual organs at Tier Two. At the third tier are the sympathetic and parasympathetic mechanisms, which are organs working in concert. At tiers four and five we find additional organ level systems serving as subsystems and components of the organism level system. The integration of the organ level systems into a system at the organism level can be traced on this scheme (Duncan, 1977).

When we actually imagine the linkages and the relationships between these various tiers, the following circuitry is established: at the corporate or urban scale level, we have general management; its task is to link together the internal and operational here-and-now with the external-and-future, so that informed and workable policy decisions can be taken by the Board. We would like to emphasize and model at this point the two major linkages this Urban Children's System is likely tc have with its environment.

As has been described, there is an immediate relationship between the neighborhood divisions and the neighborhood (Figure 3). The division provides a set of social services based on its interpretation of neighborhood needs and in accordance with urban level, system-wide objectives and standards; these are called formal standards (FS, Figure 3). This neighborhood service has a service standard (SS) (which may be superior to FS) which the public of the neighborhood will evaluate with respect to its desired standards (DS). A comparator (⊗) can then be imagined as continuously comparing SS and DS and feeding back an error-correction signal (ϵ) to the divisions intending to modify the service so that any gaps between DS and SS are reduced. This first level comparator may consist of any neighborhood members who may voice discontent at regular "town meetings", they may be people in the neighborhood, such as a daycare centre director, who are related to the offered service, or a satisfactory combination may be developed formally or informally.

We generally tend to forget, however, that society is a dynamic system, that it is constantly undergoing change. At the neighborhood level, for example, desired services are continuously compared with service standards now, at time t, with previous conditions at time t-1 (Figure 4). In consequence, it will modify its desired services; this information will be registered by the divisions. At the same time this society, or neighborhood, also exercises some kind of effect on its general governing body, for example, the mayor's office, and thus may exert control either over the services' producers at the corporate level (that is the urban equivalent of The Board) or upon related service units such as zoning regulatory agencies.

Figure 3

Division - Environment Linkages

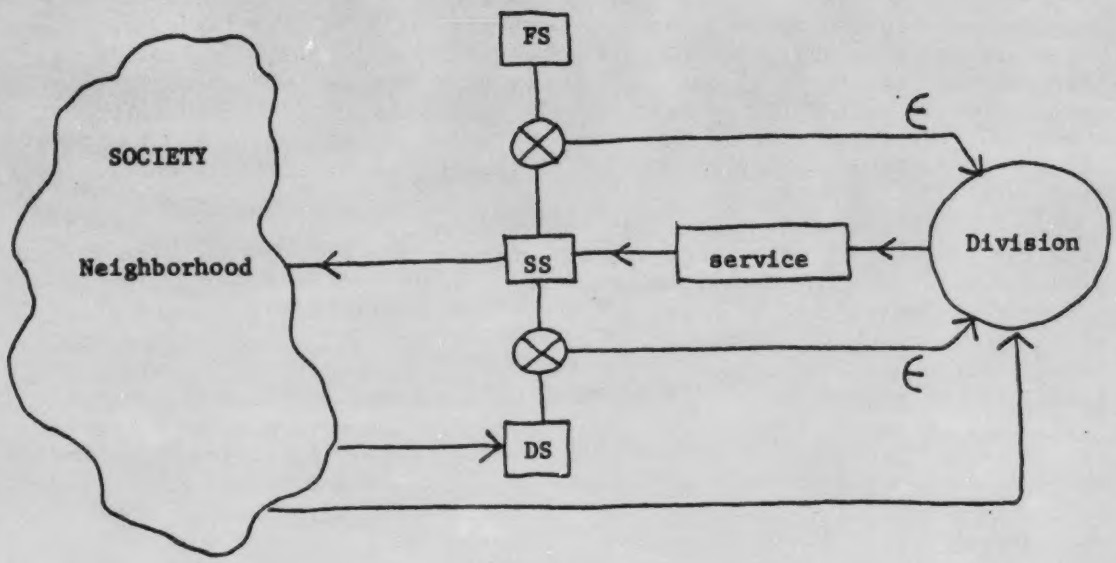
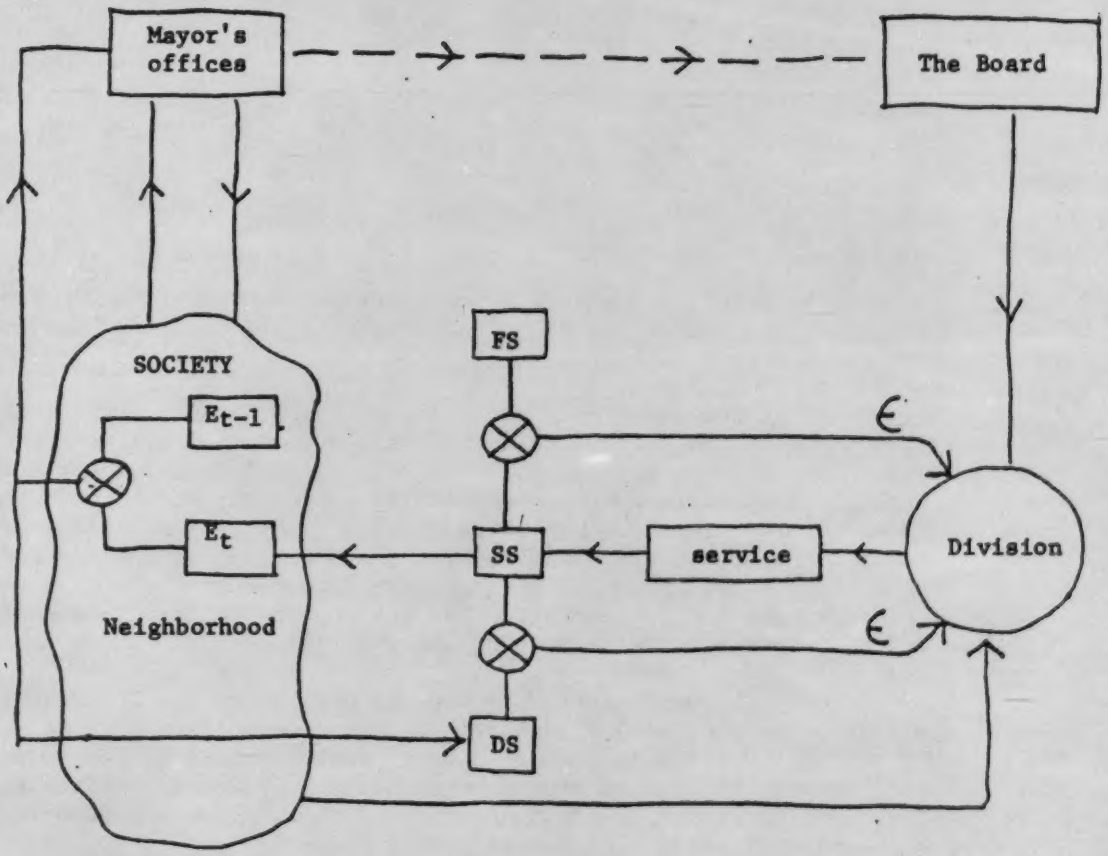


Figure 4

Organization - Environment Linkages



At the national level (and we may have as many levels as we deem effective for a viable organization), our national Children's System may be the environment of the Urban Children's System. It may consist of divisions that represent states or provinces, and which deal directly with their constituencies. A division's link with its constituency is similar to the one described for the relations between neighborhood divisions and the neighborhood. The Regulatory Centres at Tier Two perform the same functions in the same manner as has been described earlier. The Operations Directorate is a nation-wide Children's Bureau or Ministry of Children's Affairs that deals with the specifics of urban services. It incorporates under its umbrella or has as affiliates all other national agencies that deal with children's facilities, for example, housing and daycare standards. These agencies may have specific research, standard development and resource allocation functions; they may simultaneously link with other nation-level organizations having other functions.

The Development Directorate retains its previous functions and deals with future orientations as they are prescribed in the environment. The Board sets national policy.

THE CHILDREN'S SYSTEM IN OPERATION

Let us briefly examine the implications of our proposed organizational and management model for planning, designing and managing children's environments in the urban context.

First is the question of environmental suitability. Since the model provides for continuous user evaluation of services, as we have seen in the direct feedback loops between the First Tier Divisions and their neighborhood constituencies, environmental suitability can be defined by both this constituency and by more research-based information. Not only does this provide for direct input at the division level, the standard modifications and the user-based service requirements that are likely to occur at the division level will provide user-based information for the continuous improvement of city-wide and nation-wide formal standards and services.

Second, the organization we have identified as the Children's System is a model of a recursive organization. This means that the same model can be used for various levels of input or decision-making. For example, we have chosen to focus on the neighborhood as the First Tier Division in one case and on the states or provinces in the other, national, example. These appear to be logical levels, but depending on actual circumstances, a smaller unit such as a family or a city block may be more effective as the First Tier Division. At the other end of the scale, if we conceive of the Children's System as an international organization, nations become divisions. Moreover, we have identified the environment of the Children's System as another Children's System at a higher level of complexity and decision-making.

Third, let us emphasize participation. As we have indicated, all people included in a Children's System - professionals, caretakers and children - are actively involved in the organization for the purpose of achieving a common goal.

We feel that this is a conceptual as well as an effective, operational model for multi-level participatory organization. Now we have to implement it.

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THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHILD PARTICIPATION: STEPS TOWARD A PARTICIPATORY SOCIETY

by Simon Nicholson and Raymond Lorenzo

Gruppo Futuro (Community Participation by Children in Futures)
The Open University Oxford Research Unit, Oxford and Napoli

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After the assassination of Aldo Moro, President of Italy, many teachers in Napoli "suggested" to children that they write poems or draw pictures about the "tragic nature of his death", "his great career", "the violence of the Red Brigades". In the Gruppo Futuro, there were no such suggestions. Nevertheless, one 9-year old decided to record a song in folk form which he had composed, "... they've killed Aldo Moro, we'll never know the truth. They've killed Aldo Moro ... and we sit in school and really don't know anything."

The principal and teacher of a school in Napoli attempted to explain to the Gruppo Futuro why several of their futures collages (made on photographs of their community) should be censored. "Certain reactionary forces will try to manipulate the presence of several nudes in the collages as an indication of the pornographic nature of the new attitudes toward school in, for example, the Gruppo Futuro. You understand, but your parents perhaps don't." One of the children stated, "We'll explain it to them ... that's what it's all about".

Children 9 to 11 years old in the Gruppo Futuro project were scheduled to participate in a community meeting at their school concerning "green spaces". They prepared a short slide/tape about play and play spaces and a series of interviews for the politicians who were to be present. The meeting had been scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m.; the "politicos" still hadn't arrived by 6:30 p.m. While the adults sat passively waiting for the "keynote speakers", the children expressed their criticism of the delay to the principal (who was awaiting the officials' limousine outside the school) and taped her reactions on audiocassette. The meeting immediately began (without the bureaucrats) with the audio playback of the children's ideas and criticisms.

GRUPPO FUTURO

These anecdotes recount a few of the many incidents that have occurred during the encounters of the Children's Participation in Futures. Projettazione del Futuro de Parte dei Bambini (now called the Gruppo Futuro)

in Napoli and Oxford (with affiliated schools in Glasgow and Toronto) during 1978-79. Our intention was to try to create a procedure (process) in which children could actively experiment with as many media as possible in order to express, propose, question and build alternative futures with minimal interference and domination from adults (especially those likely to specialize and profess). The futures project involves two state schools in Napoli. One is in the working and middle class hill area of Vomero, and the other is in the peripheral and newly-constructed district of Rione Traiano. These schools are integrated in the sense that so-called handicapped children take part in everyday school life. In contrast, the schools in Oxford include one State Primary School in a multi-racial, mixed first-language and mixed income area, and one Educationally Sub-Normal school, whose pupils are predominantly working class; the first language for almost all of them is English, but they are segregated socially and geographically from other children.

As the project grew, our role became that of providing an initial spark of an idea that change and different futures are possible. We found that most of the children already knew this, but that schooling prohibited thoughts about many kinds of change, especially any change not of a scientific or technological nature. We became not only facilitators, we intervened in the school setting. This intervention consisted of handing over communication tools to the children, including drawing equipment, slide/tape, audiocassette/radio and video machines, a photocopier, and the facilities for printing, binding and mailing their own futures books (all of which cost less than buildings, asphalt, administrators and staff). The intervention also consisted of creating an environment where change is acceptable: most often the changes expressed by the children had to do with the community, feelings and intuitions.

It is difficult to describe our process of intervention: it does not replace experts with ourselves as "replacement experts", but instead the children are the experts. This is an inversion of what we normally know as schooling and has implications for the political basis of future society. It has been proposed that doctors cause illness; lawyers, crime; architects, ghettoes; technologists, death; and teachers, ignorance. We found that we may optimistically propose that children with adults of all ages (instead of "adult experts" only) can enjoy working in harmony toward creating a better world - nearer utopias than can presently be entertained - and that the intervention process involves simply approaching human endeavors with the future in mind as well as the past. This is an activity in which all can share.

By a natural process, the futures project gave children great autonomy compared to that normally provided by schools. For example, pupils found greater freedom to ask questions, research, experiment and to play and mix activities of the body and mind that hitherto had been separated. The children changed the way we thought: they developed their own literacies (words and images), standards and aesthetics.

POLITICAL CLIMATE

The Gruppo Futuro has a political vision: collective, libertarian, participatory. We work in political climates at some points in conflict and at others in agreement with us.

Schools normally control the expression of ideas in three ways: first, rules as to which ideas can be expressed, through a curriculum and one-way communication, "teacher" to child; second, by limiting how these ideas can be expressed, through a marking system and a media hierarchy (for example, words and numbers before images) and third, by defining with whom the ideas can be communicated (closed classroom, closed schools).

The children's free access to media broke the artificial barriers of the classroom and timetabling and "carried" the futures out to the community. Children organized debates and exhibitions when they wished. They often used the corridors of the school as experiment areas by attaching posters and questions. They decided when to go outside the school to research and discuss ideas (using tape recorders, for example) with people in the community.

In most instances, there were conflicts with the school structure. The conflicts were positive in that the nature of schooling and the opposing philosophy of the futures project were openly confronted with children as protagonists in the discussions. For example, children refused to take part in a conference exhibit being organized by the Napoli city administration after discovering at a meeting that they could neither participate in the conference nor decide the layout of their work.

Control of expression and action in "special schools" (for example, ESN) appears to be even greater than in schools in general. In the UK, the children identified as "sub-normal" are largely segregated into these places and taught to be passive and thus find a "place in society". On the first day of the Futures Project in one such school, it was realized that after half an hour no drawing had begun, since packages of crayons and paper had simply been left on the tables: the children were unaccustomed to choosing the colors themselves and awaited our distribution of colors. (The children were also expected to drink their own milk on cue, that is, all at once.)

Change and variety were considered dangerous for these children - the hymn "Our Great Unchanging Friend" was sung often - yet their images and ideas expressed capacity to understand change, and cope with it. Throughout the duration of the Gruppo Futuro and the work of a parallel group entitled Cooperativa Monte Olimpino in northern Italy, films, slide/tapes, video tapes, poems and the like produced by "sub-normal" or "difficult" children revealed the same creative charge as those made by "normal" children. These projects serve to dismantle myths which are commonly held concerning the capacities of "privileged" or "disadvantaged" children. Most "futures projects" with children tend to select "gifted children" as participants (seen as potential leaders, only these children are allowed to propose alternatives). This practice, like the segregation of "sub-normal"

children into "special schools", is the antithesis of participation in futures, which should be continuous, integrated into real-life situations, and inclusive of everyone, not just an "elite".

A NEW WORLD

If children's participation in alternative futures could be a part of life and not confined to projects like Gruppo Futuro and similar interventions, then what transformations would occur politically? Socially? Culturally?

In an atmosphere of greater free expression and cooperation, children's ideas and images of futures are radically different than those of adults. Children in Gruppo Futuro have proposed, discussed, designed, projected with slide/tape such projects as:

- instead of television, a theatre 50 km wide in which everyone acts;
- the possibility of civil war and the subsequent destruction of all food sources except the roots ("We should go into the country to talk with farmers today about it.");
- repopulation of the countryside (rural areas);
- children and old people working together;
- hot air balloons, pocket size (rechargable) flying saucers, horses, cable cars as transport;
- communication by multi-way television or drums.

These futures are at present limited, that is, they are ideas that most adults think "cute" and unrealizable. Nevertheless, the extension of futures participation in space and time implies a great change in adults' perception of children. Children become cultural innovators and protagonists in a society in which their voices, words and images are as valid as those of adults. Learning and cultural flow become no longer one-way from adult to child but instead are multi-directional: the young can "teach" the middle-aged; the very old, the young; and so forth in infinite directions and combinations.

The outward nature of children's participation in futures seems to indicate the slow dissolution of the school as the fundamental centre for learning and "information", and its replacement by the community. Learning thus becomes integrated with living, and theory with practice.

Finally, the process of participation in futures expands critical consciousness, awareness and, subsequently, real choices and changes. Changes are seen as possible through working together: everyone participates in envisioning and building new futures, utopias which are desired and worked towards and which themselves transform continually in the process. This supposes a new conception of politics and political consciousness which is contrary to all the present proposals by major political parties in Italy and the UK: their manifestos are out of date.

Would children invent a Harrisburg?

"Utopia - non subire il ricatto del'dato, del non realistico, slargare il concetto di possibile fino al limite del nostro desirerio di esitere."

(Utopia - not submitting to the blackmail of a 'given', or a non-reality, expanding the concept of the possible to the very limit of our wish to exist.)

(Valeria Prescura)

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ORCHESTRATING ACTION FOR CHILDREN'S OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY

by Polly Hill

Children's Environments Advisory Service
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

International Playground Association

Canadian Commission for International Year of the Child

Before action comes planning; before planning comes need. In my opinion, some of our needs evidence themselves as countervailing forces and blocks to creating opportunities for play. Child advocates must intensify their determination to overcome these obstacles; we must offer more aggressive leadership. Increasing communication among these dedicated people across national boundaries throughout the world can spread valuable ideas and lead to growth in effective action programmes. I would like to list some of the reasons which I have discovered for inadequate facilities for children's play; I will also outline some proposals for meeting the needs I see. I should emphasize that, although the majority of my specific examples will be drawn from my Canadian experience, I see both the problems and the means for attacking them on an international scale.

I. WORLDWIDE OBSTACLES TO CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO PLAY

1. Society is indifferent to the importance of play and ignorant of its value in the child's education for the process of life.
2. Knowledge of the importance of play is only in the hands of professionals; it is too feebly transferred to the change-makers.
3. There are too few models to see and to follow.
4. There are very few incentives for developers to include play spaces, especially those of good quality, in their properties.
5. Municipal standards are based more on revenue-producing developments, not quality of life. The cost of maintaining parks supersedes play value and user satisfaction.
6. Government bodies, such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, have watered down their leverage by opting out of control, by simply insuring loans made by other agencies without negotiating quality, reinforcing standards, and monitoring their application.
7. In low income housing, long term cost benefits or life cycle benefits are not calculated. High density and affordability militate against children. A roof over their heads becomes the maximum, not the minimum.

8. The scale of many of our cities is dehumanizing. Many housing forms currently allowed, such as high rise or densely packed low rise, include no space for play and are inappropriate for family living.

9. Precious school land, often the only open space in old communities, is being designed to cater only to children's physical development, as if they were all monkeys or potential athletes.

10. Too much emphasis and too great a proportion of our financial resources are used for competitive sports and organized structured activities to the detriment of free play.

11. Low priority is given to the maintenance and management of play spaces. In Canada, we spend huge sums revering the dead and appealing to the aesthetic sensibilities of adults, and next to nothing nurturing the rising generation. How often do we see a run-down graveyard, an ill-kept public monument, or a scruffy tree-lined boulevard?

12. Funding for neighborhood improvements lacks controls. Millions of dollars were spent for the improvement of recreation facilities under the Neighborhood Improvement Plan of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (Canada's housing agency), but studies show that most of the money went to painting the see-saw. I call that whitewashing the old mistakes. There was no design control as a criterion for funding, as there is in Sweden.[1]

13. The provision of play opportunities is an afterthought, not planned at the same time as the road, infrastructure, and preliminary site plan, and not integrated into the fabric of the community. Planning for play is in itself town and community planning.

14. Cutbacks in times of restraint are made according to the wrong priorities. Providing hockey arenas so that a few of our most talented boys can continue to compete internationally takes precedence over offering more opportunities to more children.

15. Priority given the car in North America blocks good site planning and good traffic management as far as children are concerned, even though we kill or maim more children per year than any major epidemic in history.

II. WHAT WE OWE THE PROFESSIONALS; WHERE THEY FALL SHORT

My notion is that we now have sufficient knowledge of the developmental needs of children and the role play has in nurturing the child's full development, but it seems to be in the wrong place. Although there are, of course, different theories about child development, and different approaches to the process of learning or methods used to nurture the child's full potential, even the most contradictory theoreticians and practitioners agree that play is important. Kids all seem to do it, and if they are completely restricted by health, emotional, social or economic pressures, something

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[1] See Steen B. Esbensen, "Legislation and Guidelines for Children's Play Spaces in the Residential Environment" in this report.

fundamental goes awry. We can, then, assume that there is a body of knowledge on the importance of children's play: what play is; its role in the healthy development of children; where, how and when children play. This knowledge, unfortunately, does not seem to be in the hands of the movers and the shakers. It has not been transferred to the people who are able to see that play opportunities for children are provided because it rests in the hands of a relatively silent group of dedicated people. The people who have a basic understanding of children's play and an appreciation of its importance seem to be poor advocates. They are not protesters, do not carry placards, or sustain a persistent outrage in the face of abuse or neglect of the child's right to play.

Who are these people? They are parents, teachers, child care workers, play leaders, educators, psychologists, doctors and people in the fields of recreation, health, family life, correctional services, welfare and family housing. Some important organizations, government agencies, and people in the world give high priority to play. Yet only some of these people - not all - stand up to be counted. Many of them fight hard for their own rights, status, economic and social compensation, but not often enough for the rights of children.

III. STEPS TOWARD INTERNATIONAL ACTION

1. Assembling Information and Setting up Resources

a) National and local governments should play a role here. Every country should have a resource centre that is financially capable of serving as a mechanism for collecting, distributing and exchanging relevant information. The federal centres must be aggressive in collecting data, research studies, experiments and innovative solutions for transmittal. The knowledge that exists may be buried, or only affecting a small number of children. The authorities and the public at large are entitled to it.

Canada has two such centres: The Children's Environments Advisory Service at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Recreation Canada at the Physical Fitness and Amateur Sport Division of Health and Welfare Canada. Both of these Canadian resource centres have very shaky financial stability and inadequate human resources.

I have always maintained, at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, that if we are going to effect any useful change for the better, we must work from the bottom up and from the top down at the same time. At all costs, we ourselves must be informed, flexible and open to new ideas - recognizing and acknowledging at the same time the good old ones - all toward the aim of being a noisy advocate for a vital cause.

Lower levels of government need resource and funding centres as well. Some nations have already established such centres, at the provincial level, to aid municipalities and community groups. Ontario, with its

resource centre and grants programme, is a shining example.[2] At the municipal level, it is also important that all the relevant data be collected so that implementation is based on the best knowledge available.

b) Non-governmental organizations also are an important source of data-gathering and do act as resource networks. A few examples are the Canadian Council on Children and Youth, and specialized organizations like 4H Clubs, and Boys and Girls Clubs. Each country has its non-governmental expertise that must be used to augment government resources.

c) Also important to this data-gathering are the private foundations, which supply all-important funding.

d) Nations must look beyond their borders; they must use and support to the fullest international organizations like the International Playground Association as well as international symposia and conferences. They should also exchange visits to increase the breadth of knowledge, and learn from the successes and errors of others. The International Year of the Child is the year to capitalize on world attention, cross-fertilize through international and national exchanges, and instill long-term action plans that will reach down to the grass roots level: the child, the child now playing in the street.

2. Raising Awareness, Distributing Information, and Giving Leadership in Design Solutions

Raising awareness must be a bombardment. Time is running out. We cannot afford the land, money or time it takes to provide inadequate solutions. We must create an informed public, a "critical mass" as Barbara Ward, noted English economist, calls it, who will demand for their children better play environments.

The job of showing what is better falls to the resource groups. The most loving parent is often not aware of the possibilities, the variety of play experiences and opportunities that could be made available, or even the value of play in the child's total development. All types of communication tools should be used: mass media, written and audiovisual materials, displays, conferences and small study groups.

Research provides tools for implementation. In this computer age, facts, figures, measures and comparisons seem to be persuaders or convincers for the pragmatists and skeptics, as well as the doubting Thomases - the ones who say, "I never had all this fuss made when I was a child. I just played."

Distribution of this awareness material must reach parents and children. Children, too, have very stereotyped views of playgrounds because they have not been exposed to the range of possibilities; most are not aware,

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[2] See Alexandra Semeniuk, "A Place to Stand, A Place to Grow: Ontario's Initiatives and Activities in Support of the Child's Right to Play" in this report.

for example, of the concept of adventure playgrounds, and most do not believe adults would allow them to have unconventional play facilities. They must be informed and become part of the process.

Then we must reach, in perhaps a different way, those professionals who want to erect monuments to themselves. They are eager to use their own creative power but not to provide stimulation for the creative power of the child.

Other groups that need a special approach are the public authorities or private developers who are responsible for installing the opportunities to play. They are often suspicious of "innovations", concerned about maintenance, made immobile by vandalism. Even their steady resistance cannot be allowed to deter the advocates. The crusade must go on. They will find, if they try, that better facilities do not cost more in the long run, and they will be rewarded by user satisfaction and improved behavior.

Guidelines need to be developed as people begin to ask the question, how? At Canada Mortage and Housing Corporation, we receive many requests for concrete material, even though we are reluctant to provide solutions in the form of design manuals or working drawings. We need some answers for those who ask for help on how exactly to build or plan.

3. Building Demonstration Projects

Getting a demonstration on the ground is hard, but until we have a product to see, walk around and watch the children on in action, it is difficult to sell. Each country needs examples of good design solutions and processes to serve as concrete models for adoption. We can learn much from other countries, but until a specific project is tried in his own country, the skeptic will say, "Oh, that's easy in a socialist country like Sweden", or "They don't have the weather problems we have", or "Their children are more disciplined than ours."

Funding must be found for demonstrations, as well as for advertising and highlighting good solutions. Processes such as child participation in planning, and tenant or homeowner participation in planning, management and maintenance, can be advertised and transmitted through the various resource centres. The International Playground Association is doing this in its programme for the International Year of the Child. More and more public authorities are involving community groups in the ongoing process with happy results.

IV. ORCHESTRATING ACTION

As an advocate of children's play, I see a world with more problems and less money to deal with them. I wear many hats: my federal government job, my task as liaison from the Interdepartmental Committee for the International Year of the Child, and my work with the Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child, which consists, for the most part, of representatives from non-governmental organizations, labor and industry. I also have, for many years, been active in a national non-governmental

interdisciplinary organization for children, the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. I now am president of a non-governmental international interdisciplinary organization, the International Playground Association. All are working for children; all are working in part or in total for play; each is like a part of the orchestra. Orchestrating action in Canada has been a conscious effort to reach all levels of real and potential "movers and shakers": "the people" (big and little), all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, professionals in the housing industry and housing management, planning, recreation, education, health, child care and students in training. I am certainly not the conductor, but more like the concert master, concerned about the parts and their working relations with each other, and responsible in some way for their effectiveness with each other. I am in a position to hear the harmonies and the discords, and to recognize the gaps and the interdependence.

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CHILDREN'S NEEDS AND CHILD-SPACE RELATIONSHIPS

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INTRODUCTION

This paper will contribute some information from New Zealand, and raise aspects which the writer considers central to the subject of managing urban space in the interest of children. As children pass through their development stages, they interact with different units of space - from the room to the house, house group, and so on. The importance of these first three units of space in a child's development is confirmed. A discussion of children's needs is illustrated by New Zealand examples, which show how children's views, and their direct involvement in decision-making, if encouraged, would lead to differences in the urban environment.

The paper concludes with the suggestion that organizations which already exist can be better mobilized for planning urban space in the interest of children. Even for those viewing New Zealand, with its three million people, as a model of a manageable population scale and desirable natural and man-made environments, the paper suggests caution: the social problems occurring among New Zealand's children and young persons would not exist if our urban settlements met their needs.

CHILD-SPACE RELATIONSHIPS

In considering the city as a place for children to grow up in, we must remember the year-by-year development of each child. How often do we forget, for instance, the differences between the two-year old and the child of five or six, when we talk about "the children"? Can conclusions apply equally to children of all ages? If they cannot (and it may be unreasonable to expect them to), can we develop other conclusions which will

apply to those ages not included? More important, given our emphasis on urban space, are we considering stages in the lives of children in relation to units of urban space?

In raising these questions, I have in mind the work of Erikson and Doxiadis. The latter drew on the former, and other sources, to produce a twelve-stage classification of human development (Figure 1).

Doxiadis went on to relate these twelve stages to the fifteen ekistic units of space (Figure 2). By means of these estimates of the units of space with which one has contact at each phase of development, Doxiadis illustrates how little a child under four years of age knows of the urban environment.

At the ages when a child's faculties are developing most rapidly, the spatial milieu rests mainly within the house; the home environment requires our attention more than anything else if our concern is with optimizing a child's intellectual development.

According to the report, Familie und Wohnen (Housing and Family Life), "some aspects of social development are more sensitive to housing conditions than others". For example, it is argued that elemental trust and the emergence of an ability to love are not in themselves dependent on the size of the home although parental stress due to that factor may inhibit the development of trust and love. Similarly, ecological factors (such as a lack of space) may inhibit the full development of learning ability and intelligence.

Erikson has related his psychoanalytic work to issues of spatial arrangement. His matrix of stages of life and psycho-social crises (Figure 3) provides a helpful model when used in conjunction with the one by Doxiadis. The vertical arrows suggest the continuing importance of the named attribute which is developed at the corresponding stage of life. Erikson argues that this psychological continuity means "with each stage, some aspect of the architectural environment is 'built into' the next generation; becomes part of its tensions and conflicts, and contributes to the disturbance to which individuals and groups are prone" (in Doxiadis, 1974, p. 315).

To illustrate his argument, he gives two examples:

> If the infant's relation to his maternal caretakers must establish a certain ratio of trust over mistrust, then a mother's mistrust of her own environment and her disgust with her own placement within the spatial scheme, obviously will curtail her capacity to convey trust (p. 314).
>
> ... if, in the 'initiative versus guilt' stage, a child is habitually made to feel that he is a bad child because he uses space in a playful and exploratory way and ignores warnings he has not understood, this represents a particular environmental

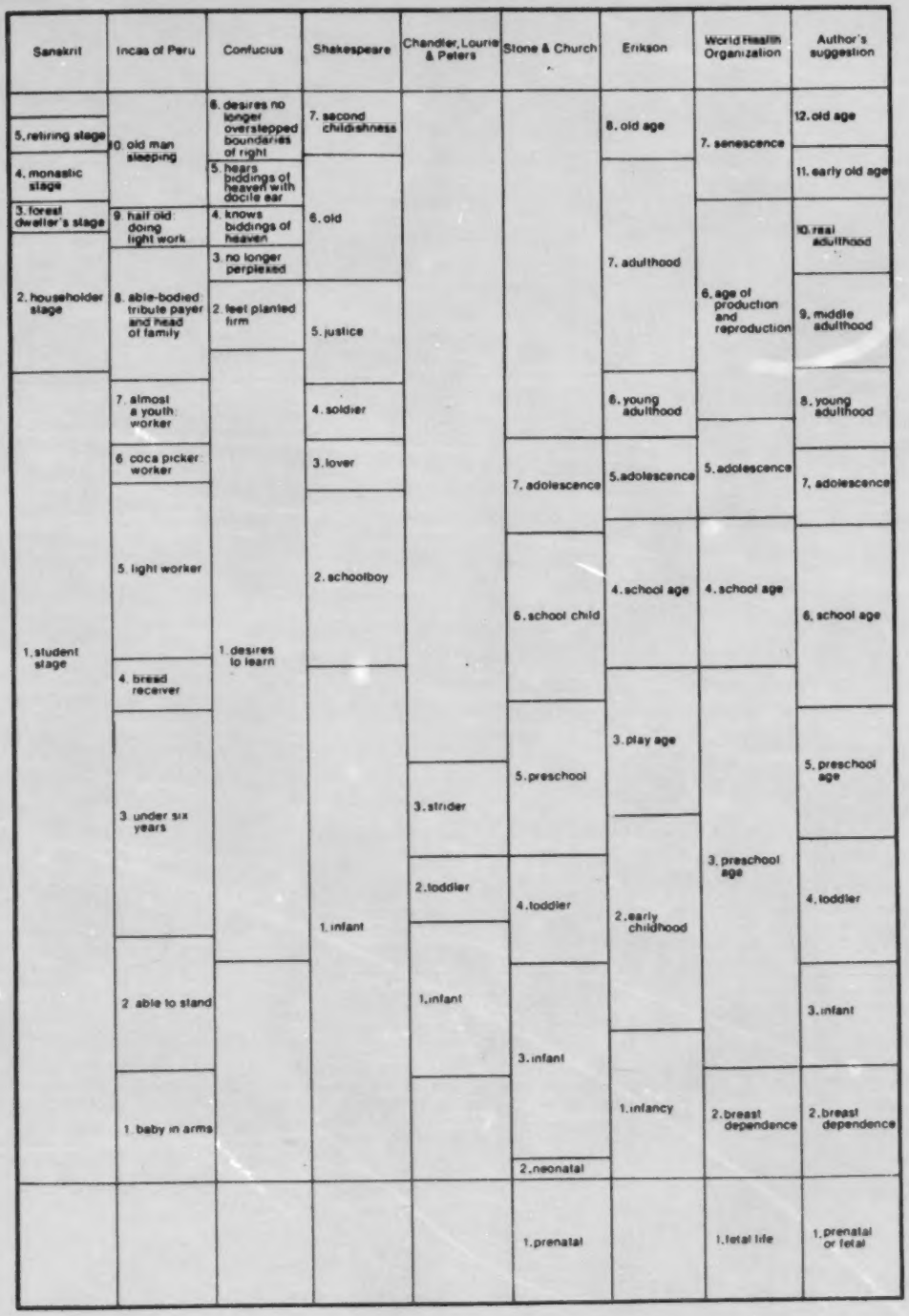

Figure 1. Several Concepts of Human Development Phases (Doxiadis 1974, 57)

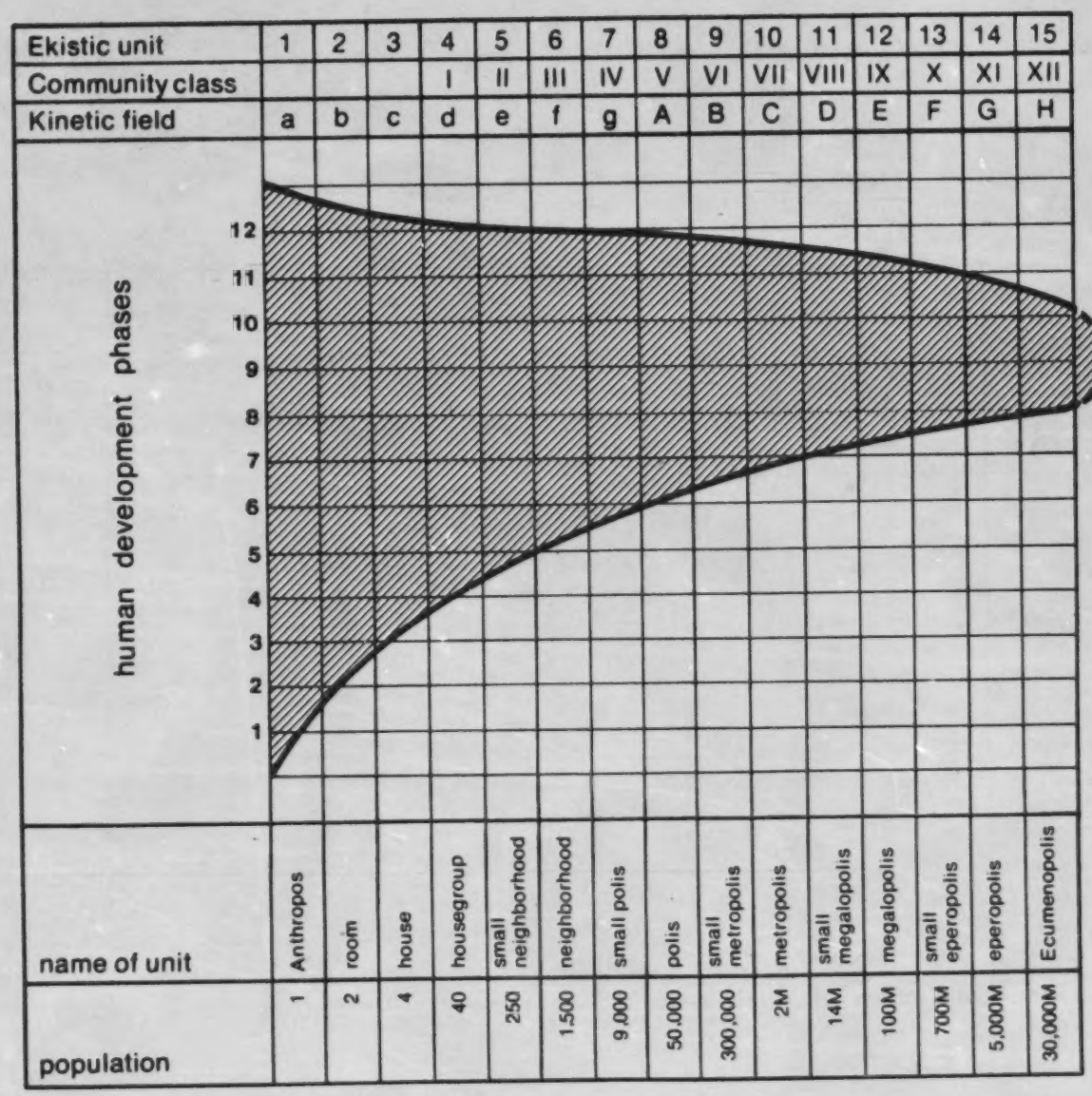

Figure 2. Mobility in Space by Development Phases
Conquering the World and then Stepping Back (Doxiadis, 1974:63)

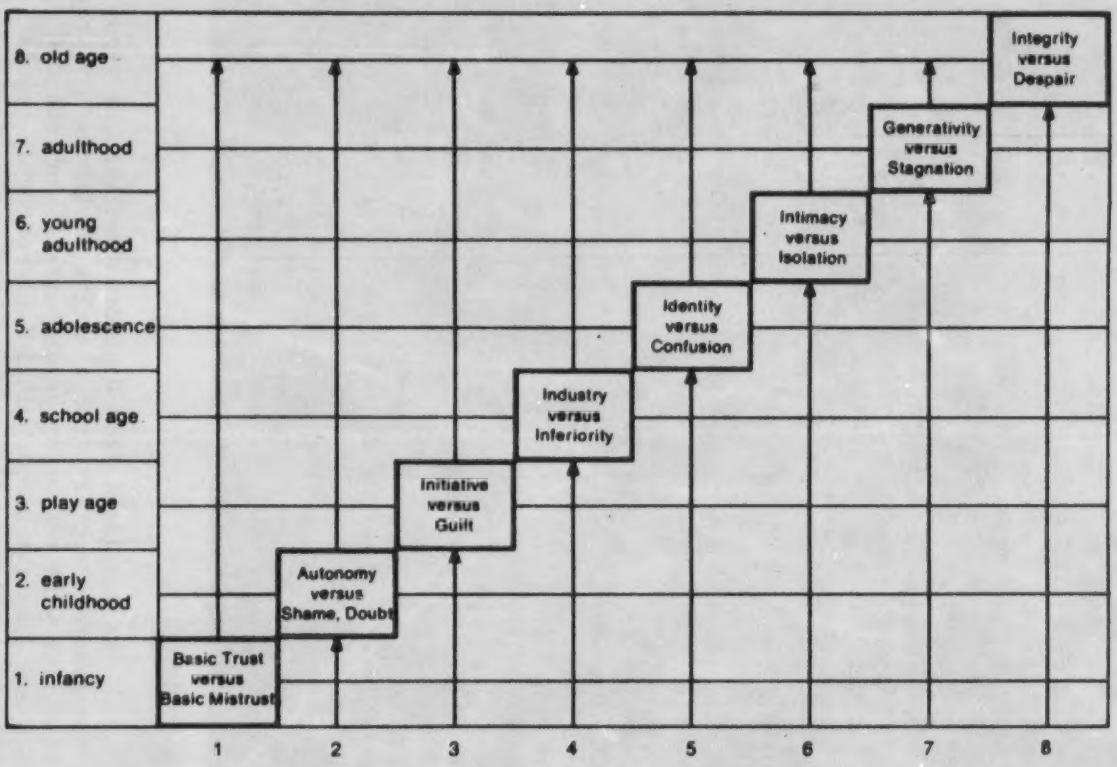

Figure 3. Psychosocial crises in the life cycle (Doxiadis 1974:314)

> reinforcement of the way in which parents establish inhibitory guilt in the child, instead of making the world - as far as they can - both safe and explainable (p. 315).

For Erikson, the exciting possibility is "... of planning for Man, instead of a 'forbidding' urban environment, a facilitating one" (p. 315). Here Erikson is thinking of developmental and creative potentials, of people feeling involved, active, challenged to participate, and "enhanced in awareness" (p. 315). These are worthy goals.

One can see that the elements of a facilitating urban environment as defined by Erikson apply for each ekistic unit of space. The environment referred to in the first example above (the infant) is the home (Ekistic Units 1-4; possibly 5). If the second example refers to a school-age child (6 to 12 years), then the urban environment extends beyond the neighborhood to the town (Ekistic Unit 7).

Doxiadis has graphed three attributes of the stage of life-spatial unit relationship (time, cumulative time, movement mode), as well as a cumulative picture. He demonstrates that, as the child gets older, its perspective broadens to include use of increasingly larger units. A two-year old, for example, unlike a newborn, has begun to have meaningful experiences in his or her neighborhood, the life of a five-year old has expanded to embrace still more, and a ten-year old will probably have developed at least some conceptualization of metropolitan experience. The most striking feature of the cumulative proportion of time spent in each ekistic unit by the seventh phase (adolescent - 13 to 18 years) is the weight given to the first three units. Despite the comparatively broad horizons of these older children, more than half of their time is oriented around their homes. If the amount of time children spend in various sorts of environments is of any significance, then the analysis developed by Doxiadis points to the need for increased efforts to improve the home and its immediate surroundings. But that conclusion should not lead us to ignore the particular needs of young people at other stages, such as toddlers and school children.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS

We can learn from Doxiadis that the one group of young persons having the greatest contact with the city environment is the adolescents. It is the group with the major psychological problems due to "growing up", but these are also the people within the non-adult population who should be best equipped intellectually to understand and articulate their needs. Do they? Who listens?

A recent newspaper report about the Auckland Education Board includes several items which illustrate the nature of the problem (New Zealand Herald, 12 May, 1979). One article records a report, presented at a board meeting, of significantly increased primary school vandalism: 866 cases in the first four months of this year compared with 365 for the previous year. At the same meeting, board members evaluated a request from a local radio station for children to telephone the station with their "opinions,

book reviews, or questions about pets." Now here is an avenue for children and young people to express their views! The Board, however, ruled that primary school children will not be permitted to take part in the programme during school hours. "What (children do) afterwards (is) their parents' business." The Board also resolved that because of construction taking place on its site, a particular school could have permission to reduce the lunch hour by 30 minutes, shortening the day at school in a "bid to 'save the sanity of teachers' and the clothes of children." Perhaps these pupils can spend their extra time calling the radio talk-back show, or vandalize school property yet again!

I detail these examples because New Zealanders (on the whole) believe, "It's a great place to bring up kids." Jane and Jim Ritchie, in their recent book Growing Up in New Zealand, title their final chapter with that essentially adult perspective. They go on to explain why by talking about childhood:

> We look back, and most of those we have talked to do also, upon childhood, especially the primary years, as being full of rich delight of parents and children doing new things together in holidays, at the beach or in the mountains, learning about local history from old identities and members of the family, poking around in second-hand shops, fishing from or visiting the wharves, exploring the nooks and crannies of cities. Along the way they bump into and learn from and about a wide range of different sorts of people. Learning is more than just schooling - we see an environment in which everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher for everyone else ... (p. 175).

Discussing the way in which the urban-rural distinction is blurred in New Zealand, they explain how "quality of life" is not opera, ballet or art galleries, but access to the natural environment: farm, forest, lake, ocean beach. And they describe how, if we plan for children in our New Zealand cities, it is usually an afterthought: "Were there a political lobby organized by children, town planners might find a thousand ways to improve the city environment for children." (p. 177) What they do not say is that 65% of New Zealand's children under 15 live in 24 urban areas with 20,000 or more inhabitants.

Gerhard Rosenberg confirms the Ritchie's sentiment when he describes essays written by adolescents (in his "Adolescent Needs in the Urban Environment" SET 78). On the city centre he concludes, "But in the main the city ignores children, except, perhaps, during the holidays." Of the extracts quoted by Rosenberg, one is particularly pertinent given the newspaper accounts above:

> What do we really need? We need a cinema, a skating rink, good parks and perhaps even a community centre. We could do with a lot of other things, but we need these things mainly because everyone is getting bored, so they just get into mischief.

And so we find ourselves considering the city-wide location of "things for kids to do". The issue, once again, is geographic space, and what goes within it. But, of course, benefitting from the earlier discussion of child-space relationships, we appreciate that what may suffice for one age group, at one time and in one place, may not do for all. It is nevertheless clear that our urban settlements "must provide enough variety of situations in which the child can act." (Rene Dubos, in Doxiadis, 1974, 333).

Our experience in New Zealand, however, confirms that providing variety and opportunity is, in itself, not enough. Each child requires confidence to tackle new opportunities. Adults, therefore, must consciously develop in children familiarity with new situations in order to give children the capacity to fully utilize a broad range of settings. It is clear, therefore, that designing urban space in the interest of children is by itself not enough; consideration must also be given to ways and means for enabling children to capitalize on and appreciate the opportunities provided by the design-management process.

DECISION-MAKING: WHO, WHERE, WHY AND HOW?

Children are not excluded from contributing to and participating in decision-making, yet they are not encouraged to do so. The condition of childhood itself presents obvious obstacles. As noted above, Jane and Jim Ritchie have reflected on the possibility of a political lobby organized by children. Should we be thinking more carefully about how information from children is obtained and channelled to the decision-makers? Gerhard Rosenberg's technique of soliciting essays from young people, also discussed above, can provide information that can be useful for planning. Informal conversation can be appropriate in some situations. I have also found writing stories and drawing pictures effective ways for children to express their views on environment. My work also suggests that professionals making decisions about children in the urban environment have appeared closer to understanding children's actual behavior than have parents (Fookes, 1974). But it is pressure on politicians from parents rather than their children which determines whether a professional recommendation is accepted and implemented. Parental education on how to orient their children to capitalize on urban space opportunities is therefore also required; socio-economic impediments to this must be faced.

Public participation is not fully representative even for adults. Concern is developing that school boards, for example, set meeting times that effectively exclude participation by professionals, laborers and housewives. "I don't believe (Auckland's) Education Board should always be controlled by grandparents", one member recently asserted (New Zealand Herald, 10 May, 1979). Can adolescents also have representatives on such boards?

We have considered widening representation and more generally improving information flow from children to decision-makers; should we also consider a wider community planning role for groups already centered on local schools? We know of the existence in New Zealand of school committees, as well as kindergarten and playcentre committees. Why should a school committee limit itself to matters concerning activities within the school boundaries?

Representation has been known from school committees worried about traffic hazards and the proposed location of hotels and taverns. Could typical representations offered by such committees not extend to include recommendations on general planning matters, such as decisions made about providing "things to do"? If, for example, the members of a particular committee heard about a proposed sanitary landfill which would remove a principal wilderness play area in their neighborhood, why should they not object formally as the "XYZ School Committee"? Nothing stops such groups from participating in the wider town planning process, yet they have never been encouraged to move outside the scope of their organizations. The planning process itself may appear daunting to them.

Meanwhile, government advisory bodies prepare public information which appears implicitly sympathetic to children.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There may be some cynicism as to the relevance of occurrences in New Zealand to more industrialized and urbanized societies. We are small and have an economy based on agriculture. Over 70% of our population, however, resides in urban settlements, so our experiences are perhaps pertinent.

I suggest that New Zealand provides an illustration of what can be done within larger societies by adopting smaller subdivisions for managing urban space. Doxiadis championed the term "human community", referring to settlements or parts of settlements containing up to 50,000 inhabitants. If we plan our management processes for this scale, and create operational units within that, as New Zealand has with its school committees and other local groups, then the chances of involving children of all ages and their parents are increased.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MAYOR OF DENVER, COLORADO

by Robert A. Aldrich

Professor of Preventive Medicine, Pediatrics and Anthropology
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Dear Mr. Mayor,

This is a proposal that will require implementation over several years. It addresses the predicament that many cities are facing and must consider seriously before the processes of urbanization that we are experiencing reduce the city's "human scale" to unacceptable levels. First, let me say what I propose, and then follow later with some of the reasons why this approach to city redevelopment should come under active consideration.

What I believe is losing out in our American metropolitan communities is the concept that a city should be a place that makes families and children safe and happy. Cities that do not foster children are very likely not advantageous for adults either. Thus, I propose that a programme be initiated by the mayors of our large cities that I would title "The Child in the City Programme". The scope would include examination of the network of people and things that can advance children's learning, physical growth and development, emotional and social maturation, as well as their feeling of being participants in the cities in which they live. In other words, we must ask ourselves, "What is in the city for children?" The programme itself would reach into several specific aspects of the interactions between children and their city, such as housing, schooling, health, recreation, and transportation, but not be limited to these major topics. These are complex matters that are not yet clearly understood and will require both research in United States cultural settings and comparison with cultures elsewhere. Grouping of ethnic populations is virtually a universal phenomenon even when they are transplanted to another country. They retain their ethnic values, music, language, dress and customs for generations largely because this gives them a feeling of comfort and trust in each other and affords an effective proven milieu in which to transmit within the family and neighborhood those basic values that they hold.

There are many interesting subheadings for studies of the child in the city. I would like to suggest a few that are probably not on the current civic agenda in the United States, but which are considered to be very important in some other nations. For example, traffic patterns in and through residential neighborhoods are directly related to injuries and fatalities among children, and these unwanted accidents are the product of multiple factors, all of which are manageable to a much greater degree than they have been; the design of housing and furnishings in the home is directly related to a variety of injuries to children such as scalding, electric burns,

poisoning, injury from falls against sharp-cornered furniture or damaged fingers from sliding doors and windows, excessive exposure to noise with its accompanying mutilation of hearing; and of course the long-term effects of bad air sometimes contaminated by chemicals.

Families bringing up children today who live in urban communities find themselves in a difficult dilemma. On the one hand, there are jobs and employment in the city, but on the other, the structure and function of the metropolitan scene is frequently a serious barrier to fulfilling family responsibilities for their children as well as performing their work at paid employment in a satisfactory manner. Just getting around the city is in itself a major problem, because residential neighborhoods which are designed and function favorably for children and families are very scarce where the jobs are located. The regular requirements of families for services like food are increasingly difficult to meet within the same part of the city where both jobs and acceptable family housing are located. Fragmentation of families is growing and tends to reduce child-family contacts; recreation is similarly disappearing for children and family within cities.

The project called "The Child in the City" will systematically search for the uses of the city as a positive and creative set of forces in the development of children and youth and their families. Much of the activity will be based upon the utilization and participation of citizens rather than officials; a fundamental part will be the participation in the programme by children, as successfully demonstrated by "Milieu 70" in Canada a decade ago. Sponsorship of this project in a city will necessitate encouragement and support by city government, financial and business interests, educational resources and bipartisan political forces. In many ways, a project of this kind is a "do it yourself" programme analogous to spring cleaning of one's home and yard. My rather strong belief that something like this can be accomplished stems from the fact that there are a few cities in other countries which are doing this successfully, Toronto, for example. And second, that there are striking differences in "livability" among U.S. cities, with quite a lot written recently on the criteria for "livability". Finally, I am impressed by the findings of the International Symposium on the Future of Children[1] at which participants addressed the child's situation in the city during one full day in Athens in 1978. In short, there is mighty little in the city for the child; cities are built by and for adults and function as if children were unwanted and unnecessary.

What are some of the reasons for proposing this idea now? In our nation, we are faced with a demographic situation that has never happened before. The population base of young children is very small because of the low birth rate, and at the other end of the age range the population is expanding rapidly. Soon after the turn of the century, today's three-year olds will be about 40 to 45 years of age, taking charge of national affairs and having not only to manage national activities but also to deal effectively with a huge population over 65 years of age with strong political demands

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[1] The Child in the World of Tomorrow, General Editor, Spyros A. Doxiadis, M.D., Pergamon Press, 1979.

and financial needs. Today's children will have extraordinary responsibilities in middle age; they must be offered the best that we know how to provide them with during their growth and development. They must have the resources now where they live and where their families work if they are to be prepared for the early 21st century. Since so many children live in the city, and the proportion is growing, cities can no longer delay in dealing with this predicament. Let it suffice to raise this question: can we describe the gap between what cities are and what they could be? If we can, then we should be able to undertake appropriate measures to improve cities for children. Finally, I am concerned about the lack of appreciation we appear to have for the future relationships of today's children in our own country with those in the rest of the world. Decisions about this are mainly in the hands of contemporary middle-aged men and women: politicians, military officials and industrial executives whose concern for being good ancestors to new generations of children seems to have a low priority.

I hope that this letter will be viewed as an effort to articulate a strategic question about our cities and our nation that is understandable and feasible. It has long range philosophical and economic implications for all of us and could materially affect our understanding and cooperation with other nations.

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M A B / C A N A D A

RAPPORT n° 14

L'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN DANS L'INTERET DE L'ENFANT

rapport édité par

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et

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(sauf pour l'article de Simon Nicholson et Raymond Lorenzo)

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PAGE D'EDITION

Ce rapport du MAB/Canada tourne autour de la teneur d'un colloque international sur le thème "L'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant", qui s'est tenu en juin 1979 à Toronto (Canada). La rencontre, organisée sous l'impulsion des responsables du Projet "Child in the City" (L'enfant et la ville) à l'Université de Toronto, a été officiellement parrainée par le Programme de l'UNESCO sur l'Homme et la biosphère et coordonnée par le MAB/Canada; elle a eu lieu avec le concours du Conseil canadien de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, de l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux, du secrétariat de l'Année internationale de l'enfant et de la Société mondiale d'ékistique.

Les participants ont été désignés par les comités MAB dans leurs pays respectifs, suivant les critères communiqués par les organisateurs. Les délégués ont chacun soumis un exposé, et des observateurs d'organisations coopérantes et de la région se sont joints au colloque. Participants et observateurs ont été répartis en trois groupes de travail qui ont chacun déposé leurs conclusions en vue d'en discuter.

Le présent recueil renferme des travaux provenant de chaque exposé et de chaque groupe. Le premier article, intitulé "L'ampleur de la tâche", introduit et survole les travaux de la réunion, en présentant chacune des contributions et une analyse d'ensemble; il explique également les raisons de l'agencement de ces exposés. Pour les besoins de ce rapport et par souci de clarté, les éditeurs ont revu et abrégé les documents de travail. Bien que les exposés et les opinions avancées engagent leurs seuls auteurs, la responsabilité de la teneur, de la forme et de l'intégrité des travaux a été confiée aux éditeurs.

Les responsables du Projet "Child in the City" ont pu préparer le colloque grâce au financement de base accordé par la Hospital for Sick Children Foundation, Les organisateurs ont bénéficié de l'appui financier et autre de la ville de Toronto, de Environnement Canada en relation avec le Programme canadien sur l'Homme et la biosphère, de Harbourfront, de McDonald's of Canada Ltd., de la municipalité de la métropole de Toronto, de la province de l'Ontario, de l'UNESCO/Paris, et du Centre d'études urbaines et communautaires de l'Université de Toronto.

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L'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN DANS L'INTERET DE L'ENFANT

L'AMPLEUR DE LA TACHE

William Michelson et Ellen Michelson

Projet "Child in the City"
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Dans cet article d'introduction, nous voulons faire entrevoir les aspects concrets d'une démarche ordonnée, quoique complexe, qui permettrait un environnement mieux adapté aux intérêts, à la santé et au bien-être de l'enfant. Nous allons parler du fondement et du raisonnement des exposés contenus dans ce rapport. Nous souhaitons en outre donner une meilleure vue d'ensemble des problèmes pragmatiques touchant l'enfant et son environnement, mis en lumière au travers des exposés et des travaux du colloque.

La plupart des sociétés ont une attitude fort ambivalente vis-à-vis des enfants. Presque tout le monde reconnaît en principe leur importance: ils sont la clé du futur, l'espoir de demain, la seule catégorie privilégiée, etc. Bien souvent, les dépenses scolaires représentent le plus gros poste dans les budgets municipaux, et les grandes personnes se préoccupent beaucoup de la protection dans la circulation, de l'aménagement de terrains de jeux et d'autres problèmes particuliers aux enfants. Le fait est que l'Année internationale de l'enfant a été une idée conçue par les adultes et un moyen d'attirer sérieusement l'attention sur la santé et le bien-être des enfants. Toutefois, ces initiatives prennent une tournure ambivalente quand on les examine dans un contexte plus général. Ainsi au Canada, alors même qu'ils décrétaient l'Année internationale de l'enfant, certains des gouvernements amputaient les budgets des principaux services en faveur des enfants, dont rien que le maintien devenait la moindre priorité dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la santé et du bien-être. Dans bien des régions du globe, le degré d'immunisation commence à fléchir et l'on assiste à une recrudescence de maladies infantiles traditionnelles. Des milliers et des milliers d'enfants réfugiés meurent sans que la communauté internationale réagisse. Même les nations industrialisées semblent souvent faire peu, sinon pas, de cas des besoins de l'enfant en dehors du foyer et de l'école, tandis que dans le tiers-monde sa condition ne constitue qu'un des multiples problèmes pressants à régler avec des moyens trop faibles. Même si l'amour des enfants peut être universel, qu'avons-nous donc fait récemment pour leur venir concrètement en aide?

Le colloque organisé avait pour thème "L'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant". La ville n'est pas nécessairement pire ou meilleure que la campagne pour les enfants. De toute évidence, chaque extrême comporte ses bons et ses mauvais côtés et même le plus rigoureux des savants n'a pas réussi à délimiter de manière absolue les influences et les modes de vie propres au milieu urbain. Cependant, dans les vastes et complexes ensembles

que nous appelons les villes et qui offrent tant de possibilités d'activités de toutes sortes, les enfants ont beaucoup de choses en commun avec les vieillards, les handicapés et autres "minoritaires".

1. Ils sont petits et faibles. Ils sont souvent incapables de presser sur des boutons, d'ouvrir des portes, de traverser la rue, d'emprunter des moyens de transport ou de faire fonctionner des appareils.

2. Ils ont rarement beaucoup d'argent et ne peuvent donc pas faire les mêmes choses que les adultes, même s'ils étaient suffisamment grands et forts pour cela.

3. Ils ne sont généralement pas en mesure d'influer sur les décisions et les lignes de conduite des autorités urbaines, car ils ne peuvent voter, intenter des poursuites ou intervenir par ailleurs en tant que personnes juridiquement autonomes. Seule une certaine compassion de notre part fait, comme dans le cas de tant de minoritaires, qu'ils ne sont pas complètement ignorés. Ce détachement à l'égard de l'enfant et de ses intérêts devient d'autant plus préoccupant que les tendances démographiques indiquent une régression de la proportion d'enfants dans bien des pays comme le Canada, et une augmentation du pourcentage de personnes âgées. Et alors même que la proportion d'enfants régresse, les votants ont commencé à se montrer moins enclins à soutenir la cause de l'enfant que ne le justifient les statistiques démographiques.

4. Le milieu urbain prend une importance accrue dans le cas de l'enfant si l'on pense que, bien qu'essentiellement prévu pour l'adulte, il constitue "l'école" où se formeront pour toujours habitudes et conceptions.

5. Les enfants ont encore plus de mal que les autres minorités urbaines à affronter l'hostilité potentielle du milieu, ne serait-ce qu'en raison de leur inexpérience.

Du fait de ces facteurs parmi d'autres, il est indispensable que les autorités municipales, les spécialistes et les grandes personnes en général considèrent l'intérêt de l'enfant au niveau de l'aménagement urbain, chose qui de toute évidence ne va pas se faire d'elle-même ou sur initiative des enfants.

Le colloque a été organisé sous l'impulsion des responsables du projet "Child in the City" à l'Université de Toronto (Canada), sous l'égide du Programme de l'UNESCO sur l'Homme et la biosphère, et en collaboration avec des organismes tels que la Société mondiale d'ékistique et l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux. Des délégués de seize pays, représentant un large éventail de disciplines et de conjonctures, y ont assisté. On a laissé clairement entendre dès le départ, dans les modalités, que les participants allaient étudier au travers d'exposés et de discussions qu'est-ce qui devait être fait pour et par les enfants, quelles personnes ou groupes de personnes pouvaient le mieux contribuer à améliorer le cadre de vie urbain de l'enfant, et quelles ressources et mécanismes politiques, économiques et autres s'imposaient pour y parvenir. Se concentrer

sur ces questions était jugé essentiel pour pouvoir répondre par la suite aux préoccupations bien intentionnées concernant l'environnement de l'enfant.

L'utilité des exposés peut se voir sous différents angles. Divers auteurs se concentrent sur les phénomènes les plus préoccupants, en ce qui concerne les enfants des villes, à l'un ou l'autre niveau d'agglomération; cela va des problèmes de l'enfant individuel et de sa position face au milieu jusqu'aux problèmes communs à tous les enfants du monde. Néanmoins, ce serait une grave erreur de donner à penser par cette approche que le message se limite à des applications aux divers niveaux d'agglomération. Les phénomènes à prendre en compte pour l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant comportent de multiples facettes et sont indissociables d'autres aspects de l'existence. Leur complexité peut servir à expliquer l'ambivalence de l'univers des adultes, sans parler des progrès limités réalisés jusqu'ici dans la prise en considération du cadre de vie de l'enfant. Nous voulons tous bien faire, mais si chemin faisant on se laisse empêtrer dans les détails et les retards, irrémédiablement enliser ou détourner par des projets plus importants ou profitables pour les autres adultes, les meilleures intentions produisent des résultats superficiels ou restreints, non des effets ou des changements profonds ou durables.

A nos yeux, nos recherches dans le cadre du Projet "Child in the City",[1] les exposés ci-après, ainsi que les travaux de notre colloque font clairement ressortir au moins cinq facteurs à prendre expressément en compte si l'on veut parvenir à rendre l'environnement humain pour l'enfant. En général ces facteurs, quoique largement reconnus en théorie, n'ont pas été incorporés dans des programmes d'action. "Reprocher" aux adultes de ne pas prendre les mesures qui s'imposent en faveur des enfants est assez facile; toutefois, d'après le colloque, l'adoption de mesures constructives, progressistes, est une entreprise de grande envergure qui fait intervenir tout un ensemble de facteurs complexes. Cette conclusion ne doit pas s'interpréter comme une excuse pour repousser ou dissuader la prise de mesures convenables, mais comme le point de départ d'une action réaliste pour surmonter les multiples obstacles aux améliorations. Passons donc en revue ces facteurs, en notant comment certains des exposés qui suivent y touchent.

1. Développement de l'enfant

Au cours de son développement, l'enfant traverse diverses phases qui soulèvent d'importants problèmes dont nous devrions nous préoccuper dans le contexte urbain. Nous aimerions répertorier certains des points en cause ici.

Tout d'abord, cela signifie que l'enfant se situe quelque part à mi-chemin entre l'être quasi impuissant et l'adulte en puissance, de par

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[1] Voir par exemple William Michelson, Saul V. Levine et Ellen Michelson (éd.), The Child in the City: Today and Tomorrow, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979, et W. Michelson, Levine, Anna-Rose Spina Et Cie, The Child in the City: Changes and Challenges, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

son niveau de développement non seulement physique (avec les facultés qui en résultent), mais aussi intellectuel, perceptif, personnel et social.[2] Les problèmes posés par exemple par le niveau de développement intellectuel et perceptif sont extrêmement importants. Suivant la situation, les enfants ne sont pas toujours capables de faire face à un danger ou de trouver une solution avant un certain âge. Des études ont ainsi montré que l'enfant ne peut pas réagir comme un adulte aux dangers de la circulation avant l'âge de onze ans environ, en laissant entendre qu'aucun enseignement ne suffit si les dangers restent importants.[3] En revanche, si l'on parvient à aménager son cadre de vie de façon à le protéger contre les pires dangers, l'enfant prend de l'assurance en affrontant petit à petit les autres problèmes qui l'entourent. Du développement personnel et social, il ressort qu'en grandissant l'enfant va passer son temps avec des personnes différentes et faire des choses différentes.[4] D'habitude, son activité se particularise, tend à se diversifier s'il en a la possibilité, et le genre d'espace public (comme le terrain de jeux) qui convient à l'enfant d'un certain âge ne répond pas à ses besoins à un autre âge.

L'article de Fookes, par exemple, s'inspire des travaux de Erik Erikson et de Constantine Doxiadis pour dépeindre douze phases de développement chez les enfants, qui se rattachent de manière différente à quinze niveaux de milieu. En outre, certains des exposés (comme ceux de Hill et Friendly, de Jacobs et Jacobs, de Little et de Moore) soulignent que les espaces dont ont besoin les enfants à divers niveaux de développement ne sont pas toujours logiquement définissables par les grandes personnes. Les enfants eux-même attribuent et pèsent les critères d'après lesquels ils jugent leur milieu. Les adultes pour leur part, étant donné qu'ils ne sont pas au même stade et n'ont pas les mêmes intérêts, sont souvent incapables de discerner et à plus forte raison de comprendre le point de vue et donc les besoins de l'enfant.

Les travaux de ces auteurs indiquent qu'il faut prendre en compte non seulement les phases de développement, mais aussi de manière directe les idées et les conceptions des enfants dans tout processus qu'exige l'aménagement urbain. Jacobs et Jacobs montrent que certains adultes peuvent mieux traduire les point de vue de l'enfant s'ils ont la formation universitaire pertinente. Néanmoins, faire représenter directement les enfants est souvent payant pour plus d'une raison. Ainsi, un aspect de l'amour-propre est la faculté d'exercer un certain contrôle sur son milieu; l'enfant en a

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[2] Un excellent exposé des relations du développement de l'enfant avec l'architecture et l'urbanisme est offert par Anne-Marie Pollowy dans The Urban Nest, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvanie: Dowden, Hutchinson et Ross, Inc., 1977.

[3] Stina Sandels, "The Scandia Report II: Why Are Children Injured in Traffic: Can We Prevent Child Accidents in Traffic?", Stockholm: Scandia Insurance Co. Ltd., 1974.

[4] Howard F. Andrews, "Home Range and Urban Knowledge of School-Age Children", Environment and Behaviour, Vol. 5 (1973), 83 à 86.

rarement la chance, ce qui l'empêche de développer une attitude adulte convenable à l'égard du cadre de vie. Comme le souligne Churchman, on devrait tout faire pour aider à développer un tel sentiment chez les enfants; on leur reproche de ne pas respecter la propriété, mais comme l'indiquent Churchman, Little et d'autres, les choses pourraient aller nettement mieux si nous commencions par traiter l'enfant avec respect au niveau de l'aménagement urbain. Verwer, de son côté, prévient que les enfants risquent d'avoir des idées traditionnelles pour l'aménagement car, dans leur courte vie, ils n'ont pas nécessairement connu un très large éventail de possibilités. Toutefois, consulter l'enfant est la condition capitale au succès de l'entreprise.

Tenir compte de son point de vue peut aider à mieux comprendre sa situation en tant que minoritaire, handicapé et défavorisé dans le contexte de l'aménagement urbain. Dans cette optique, on considérerait l'ampleur de l'aménagement qui s'impose pour permettre aux enfants d'affronter la vie urbaine. Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, l'enfant doit être capable de faire fonctionner les dispositifs qu'il rencontre. Les installations doivent donc être non seulement à "l'échelle humaine" (ce qui devrait être un objectif de la société, comme le soulignent Aldrich et bien d'autres), mais aussi à l'échelle et la portée des enfants: voir par exemple les exposés de Knight, de Sharonov et de Verwer. Un exemple évident que mentionne Churchman est l'escalier conventionnel conçu pour l'adulte de force et de taille moyenne, et non pour le vieillard, l'handicapé ou naturellement le petit enfant.

Ainsi donc l'enfant se différencie, individuellement, d'un autre et, collectivement, de l'adulte moyen. Il faut tenir compte de ces réalités au niveau de l'aménagement urbain.

2. L'espace

La constatation que l'enfant traverse diverses phases de développement en interprétant chemin faisant le cadre de vie implique certaines choses au niveau de l'éventail des espaces urbains entrant dans l'aménagement. Ainsi, en grandissant, l'enfant devient en mesure de se comporter d'une manière plus sûre dans le cadre du foyer, du voisinage et de la ville, de s'aventurer dans un plus grand nombre d'endroits, d'entrer en contact avec davantage de gens, quoiqu'il s'intéresse à des choses de plus en plus précises. C'est pourquoi le genre d'espace généralement prévu pour les enfants (comme un terrain de jeux) risque de convenir uniquement à ceux d'une certaine tranche d'âge, en s'avérant trop élaboré pour les plus petits et dépassé pour les adolescents. Nos préoccupations ne doivent pas s'arrêter à quelques usages traditionnels de l'espace, mais s'étendre à tout un ensemble de détails et d'échelles.

Ainsi, en nous mettant à la place de l'enfant vu depuis sa naissance jusqu'à son adolescence, nous nous concentrons sur des aspects du voisinage et de la ville qui touchent de moins en moins simplement le foyer, l'école, la paroisse, le terrain de jeux, et qui sont souvent très éloignés. Nous découvrons aussi trop souvent que les endroits où cet enfant passe son temps n'ont pas été prévus ou conçus pour l'enfance ou la jeunesse.[5] Les

[5] Kevin Lynch, Growing Up in Cities, MIT Press et UNESCO, 1977.

grandes personnes sont peut-être surprises quand les enfants de dix ans jouent dans des parcs de stationnement et non des terrains de jeux; elles sont souvent mécontentes quand des jeunes de quinze ans se réunissent dans des centres d'achat, des salles de billard et des restaurants. Pourtant, ces utilisations d'espaces urbains non conçus pour les enfants traduisent des besoins et des désirs débordant ce qui est officiellement aménagé à leur intention. Les endroits où vont les enfants et ce qu'ils y font résultent souvent de ce qui est accessible et disponible dans les espaces qui conviennent compte tenu de leur âge et de leur intérêt. Tout ce qu'ils utilisent ou pourraient utiliser n'a pas besoin d'être fait sur mesure, pas plus que les fruits cultivés sont les seuls mangés par les oiseaux. Cependant, pour satisfaire l'enfant d'une manière positive, nous devons être conscients d'une vaste gamme de possibilités qui, même créées, sont adaptées à son âge et à son goût.

Ces possibilités s'étendent de l'intérieur de la propre unité d'habitation de l'enfant aux aires communes dans les immeubles collectifs, aux aires contiguës aux bâtiments résidentiels, aux plus vastes espaces et parcs de jeux, aux magasins, aux rues, aux installations récréatives ou pédagogiques officielles, aux lieux d'emploi et, chose non moins importante, aux modes de transport capables de donner à l'enfant un accès réaliste aux possibilités qui lui sont expressément offertes. Les participants sont quasi unanimes pour dire que les enfants jouent partout. Churchman va jusqu'à signaler que les terrains de jeux attirent relativement peu d'enfants de plus de cinq ans. Que ce soit dans le tiers-monde ou les pays industrialisés, les enfants suffisamment âgés pour sortir non accompagnés passent un temps disproportionné sur le trottoir, dans la rue et dans d'autres secteurs du voisinage immédiat. Verwer cite l'exemple du woonerf hollandais, une tentative qui vise à contrôler l'aménagement et la circulation au sein de toute la zone résidentielle de façon à ce que les enfants et d'autres usagers puissent vaquer à leurs occupations sans courir de dangers majeurs face à la masse des gens et des véhicules. Comme le prouvent Aldrich, Churchman, Hill et Friendly, on s'est accordé dans une certaine mesure à reconnaître qu'il faut intégrer l'aménagement en faveur de l'enfant, la planification de la circulation et tous les autres aspects de l'urbanisme local, ne serait-ce que pour accommoder les habitudes de déplacement de l'enfant. Rosengren donne des exemples d'un tel aménagement intégré en Finlande.

Bien des exposés conviennent que les installations de jeux régulières ne forment qu'une petite fraction des espaces dont nous devons nous préoccuper; il importe néanmoins de noter les exemples fournis par Semeniuk pour montrer combien de possibilités de jeux différentes peuvent être offertes même dans le cadre régulier de toute la gamme d'installations. Le fait est que les possibilités offertes par les installations de jeux régulières sont beaucoup plus grandes que ne le pensent en général urbanistes et autorités.

Des auteurs d'exposés représentant des pays avec une expérience très différente - comme Honark, de Thaïlande et Hill, du Canada - conviennent qu'il faudrait se concentrer plus sur la répartition de petits parcs et terrains de jeux dans les voisinages que sur l'aménagement d'installations relativement importantes, spécialisées, convenant principalement au développement poussé d'aptitudes sportives. Nul ne trouve à redire à de telles

installations si l'on répond à la première exigence; toutefois, on met bien trop facilement des installations de champions à la disposition d'une petite minorité, tandis qu'une large majorité n'a rien. Un groupe de travail du colloque a souligné qu'il est souhaitable de juxtaposer dans les voisinages les espaces prévus pour les divers groupes d'âges afin de favoriser les contacts naturels entre générations.

Un certain nombre d'exposés ont également insisté sur l'importance d'intégrer des aspects de la nature à la portée de l'enfant urbain. Knight, Moore, Sharonov et d'autres soulignent l'importance du contact avec l'eau, la culture, des cachettes naturelles et d'autres aspects de la nature pour le développement physique et mental de l'enfant.

Un groupe de travail a mis en lumière la grande variété des usages de l'espace urbain à l'intention des enfants. Sans chercher à être exhaustif, il fait ressortir les aspects suivants: refuge; travail et jeu; santé et sécurité; contact avec la nature; musique, danse, littérature et art; sport; éducation (au sens large), formation d'attitudes et échange de renseignements; optique historique; mélange, par exemple, de groupes ethniques, d'âges, de diverses couches économiques et sociales, de nouveaux arrivants et de résidents de longue date; participation à l'aménagement urbain.

Semeniuk et Utthangkorn terminent par des avertissements et des conseils. Bien des installations et bien des activités de l'enfant dans un milieu urbain ne sont pas le résultat du hasard. Il faut aussi se pencher sur des problèmes comme la surveillance et l'orientation par des adultes ou des enfants plus âgés. Ainsi que le souligne Wireman d'après l'expérience américaine (et d'autres comme Churchman et Semeniuk sont d'accord), certaines de ces initiatives peuvent venir de réseaux naissants de voisins susceptibles non seulement d'aider à préserver ou améliorer la viabilité de leur quartier dans leur intérêt et celui de leurs enfants, mais aussi de retirer une certaine sociabilité et un certain appui d'une étroite collaboration sur des questions qui ne sont pas très personnelles. On convient également dans une certaine mesure qu'un contexte urbain favorable à l'enfant devient par la même occasion plus favorable à l'adulte qui y vit. Bien que l'enfant demeure notre préoccupation, on peut s'attendre à ce que le fruit de nos efforts profite au reste de la société.

Un groupe de travail composé de délégués a formulé d'une autre façon les problèmes concernant l'espace, en recommandant des critères convenables pour l'aménagement. A ses yeux, l'enfant urbain a besoin

1) d'un milieu sûr et sain;

2) de pouvoir avoir accès à la gamme d'installations et de groupements sociaux disponibles dans le cadre urbain;

3) de stimulants et de défis convenables, notamment de pouvoir exercer un contrôle adéquat sur le milieu physique et social;

4) d'espaces en plein air de dimensions convenables, compte tenu de sa taille et de son développement sur les plans physique, intellectuel et affectif (la diversité est ici importante);

5) d'un environnement suffisamment souple et varié.

Selon le groupe de travail, le milieu urbain qui remplit ces conditions plaira à l'enfant et à ses parents.

3. Le régime social

Les exposés démontrent aussi sans ambiguïté la nécessité de se pencher sur le contexte plus large dans lequel s'insère l'environnement de l'enfant. On est par exemple de toute évidence bien conscient que les préoccupations à propos de l'enfant et de son cadre de vie ne sont actuellement pas les mêmes dans le tiers-monde et le monde industrialisé. Ainsi, il y a un contraste assez net entre l'ampleur des préoccupations que décrit Alam dans le cas du Bangladesh et la nature des problèmes qu'évoque Swedner pour la Suède, même si tout deux réalisent parfaitement les lacunes existant dans leur pays. On peut difficilement réclamer en première priorité des terrains de jeux quand des fléaux comme la peste, la famine et la guerre sévissent encore.

Dans certains cas, les problèmes d'espace urbain pour l'enfant ne sont que la résultante de phénomènes contextuels de beaucoup plus grande envergure qui méritent eux-même attention. Ainsi, la description que fait Fahmy des répercussions du surpeuplement sur l'enfant égyptien traduit un problème physique - le surpeuplement - qui se fait ressentir dans la société égyptienne. Honark met l'accent sur l'envers du problème quand il montre comment le système de distribution des terres en Thaïlande a provoqué à Bangkok un manque général d'espaces libres pour les enfants ou les autres personnes.

Swedner expose graphiquement l'influence d'un phénomène social - la stratification - sur la nature et la qualité des installations à la disposition de l'enfant. Il montre comment, même dans un pays qui offre peut-être à l'enfant les installations et les services les plus variés et les meilleurs, les facilités ouvertes aux groupes socialement défavorisés ou inférieurs sont nettement différentes. Là aussi, Honark révèle que dans un pays n'offrant pas les mêmes services les enfants de riches ont des facilités très différentes.

Bien que personne ne conteste l'importance de considérer l'espace urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant, des auteurs comme Esbensen ou Hill et Friendly préviennent que, en tant qu'influence ultime sur l'enfant et son développement, le milieu physique doit s'insérer dans un contexte plus large de déterminants englobant nombre de facteurs très puissants tels que l'économique, l'éducation et la condition sociale. De plus, même quand on tente de faire un pas dans la bonne direction, le degré de réussite reste au moins partiellement fonction des rapports des groupements locaux avec les programmes et les organismes extérieurs; c'est ce que fait ressortir Wireman, employé par un organisme du gouvernement qui se charge de programmes d'assistance aux groupements locaux.

4. Politique et organisation

Comme nous l'avons souligné initialement, les adultes qui professent leur amour des enfants ne leur accordent pas une haute priorité au moment de décider des activités et des dépenses. Ainsi que l'indique Semeniuk, la Loi sur la planification de l'Ontario cherche à défendre un certain nombre d'intérêts, mais ne fait aucune mention du droit de jouer de l'enfant. Aldrich, Fookes, Hill et Kiossoglou conviennent de la faible priorité donnée aux besoins de l'enfant dans des pays par ailleurs "avancés" comme les Etats-Unis, la Nouvelle-Zélande, le Canada et la Grèce. Dans leurs discussions, les délégués ont préconisé l'adoption d'une politique résolument "pour l'enfant" dans chaque pays et chaque culture (qui aurait également des retombées bénéfiques sur bien d'autres segments de la population).

Beaucoup d'autres intérêts, par exemple, entrent maintenant en jeu dans les décisions concernant l'utilisation des terrains, et ceux-ci pèsent la plupart du temps plus lourd que les enfants dans la balance politique et économique. Plusieurs auteurs traitent des répercussions de la spéculation foncière sur ce plan, dès lors que les plus offrants sont en mesure de décider de la jouissance et de l'usage des terrains, tandis que Sharonov avance que le système de la propriété d'état, s'il est utilisé judicieusement, peut devenir un meilleur moyen d'adjudication. Alam mentionne que les politiques fiscales peuvent remplir la même fonction, en empêchant que l'exploitation soit régie par la capacité d'achat en premier lieu. Cependant, faire de l'enfant une principale priorité dans les dépenses d'équipement et autres décisions suppose un engagement concerté de la part de bien des gens, allant bien au-delà de pratiques spécifiquement sectorielles.

L'aspect politique et organisation amène en deuxième lieu à se demander qui participe aux décisions touchant l'enfant. Des auteurs comme Fookes et Kiossoglou s'accordent à dire que les urbanistes et les décisionnaires officiels sont rarement des personnes qui voient d'un bon ou d'un mauvais oeil l'enfant et ses besoins. Un des groupes de travail en a conclu que les personnes pouvant aménager l'espace urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant devraient faire davantage, notamment 1) sensibiliser au problème en promouvant l'éducation et l'échange de renseignements, 2) revoir les lois, règlements et procédures (et particulièrement les aspects budgétaires) pour déterminer les améliorations à apporter, et 3) contribuer à des améliorations.

Mais tout en convenant que les adultes mieux éclairés sur les besoins de l'enfant devraient jouer officiellement un plus grand rôle, bien des exposés sont favorables à une participation de l'enfant lui-même. Hill et Friendly, Jacobs et Jacobs, Little, Nicholson, Verwer et d'autres indiquent tous comment un apport vital peut et doit venir des enfants. Des auteurs comme Honark et Wireman laissent entendre que le vandalisme et l'abandon de détritus risque de régresser si l'on associe plus étroitement les enfants, et d'autres groupes auparavant exclus, au processus d'aménagement.

Un véritable dilemme se pose toutefois avec la question de savoir comment des personnes n'ayant pas ou que très peu d'expérience dans les affaires politiques ou spécialisées traditionnelles peuvent collaborer constructivement avec d'autres sur ces plans. Jacobs et Jacobs, Raundalen

et ses collègues, ainsi que Verwer estiment tous qu'une solution au problème réside dans une éducation et une expérience plus pertinentes et complètes. Les auteurs norvégiens présentent une étude de cas réalisée dans leur pays, où les enfants se sensibilisent aux problèmes d'environnement parce que leurs parents se chargent personnellement de l'entretien du voisinage, approche que les autres participants jugent également souhaitable.

Une telle participation de l'enfant, de ses parents, et des autres responsables qui s'occupent directement de ses problèmes, à l'aménagement et aux décisions concernant le milieu va beaucoup plus loin que l'effort officiel auquel se sont engagés les organismes publics envers l'enfant. Celui-ci a consisté le plus souvent à fixer des normes que les municipalités sont priées ou tenues de respecter. Parfois, comme en Suède, ces normes sont très strictes et complètes même si l'esprit de conformité peut varier (comme le soutient Swedner); dans d'autres cas, elles sont purement exhortatoires: elles indiquent un idéal aux collectivités, mais leur respect n'est pas contrôlé et à plus forte raison exigé. Les participants au colloque ont décrit dans leurs exposés tout un ensemble de normes et de critères de ce genre, régissant les installations comme les garderies, la disponibilité et l'emplacement de terrains de jeux et de parcs, ainsi que l'espace que certains gouvernements doivent prévoir même dans les projets privés. Ils indiquent clairement qu'il n'y aura jamais de liste exhaustive de normes pour un endroit et encore moins d'accord qu'un ensemble donné de normes convient pour des pays à des niveaux de développement très différents. Néanmoins, l'expérience de la recherche qui a précipité l'arrêt de certaines normes révèle un certain concensus dans des pays aussi divers que le Canada, le Danemark, la République fédérale d'Allemagne, Israël et les Pays-Bas. Les délégués ont préconisé que les municipalités et autres autorités réexaminent le fondement juridique des normes d'espace pour l'enfant, en les étoffant et les actualisant au besoin; ils ont fait remarquer en outre que la formation juridique devrait couvrir bien mieux les divers intérêts de l'enfant.

En outre, lorsqu'il s'agit à proprement parler de s'occuper de l'aménagement, de prendre des décisions ou de se débattre avec la question plus formelle des normes, les personnes associées au processus doivent être largement représentatives non seulement de par leurs âges et leurs intérêts, mais aussi du point de vue des disciplines et des formations dont les participants (adultes) sont l'expression. Si les auteurs d'exposés ont quelque chose à dire à ce propos, c'est que l'époque des commissions uniquement composées d'avocats, d'agents immobiliers, d'architectes ou de politiciens (et d'hommes!) est révolue. Les délégués eux-mêmes représentaient des disciplines comme la médecine, les sciences sociales, l'urbanisme, l'architecture et les affaires publiques, et des exposés aussi divers que ceux de Aldrich, Fahmy et Sharonov ont reconnu expressément la nécessité d'une collaboration multi-disciplinaire et d'un travail interdisciplinaire sur les problèmes concrets de l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. Il faudrait mettre l'accent sur les sciences politiques, parce qu'il est nécessaire de définir des systèmes de décision, surtout lorsque les structures officieuses, de fait, diffèrent des structures officielles, de droit. Le monde et ses problèmes concrets sont après tout "interdisciplinaires".

Mais même une fois que tous les gens qui conviennent sont mobilisés pour affronter les questions qui s'imposent, une certaine différenciation des rôles ultimes est non seulement inévitable, mais à bien des égards souhaitable, selon les auteurs des exposés. Tandis que certains comme Kiossoglou et Wireman insistent sur la nécessité pour parents et enfants d'être associés aux applications qui intéressent leur localité, d'autres comme Hill, Semeniuk et Sharonov notent le rôle vital que peuvent jouer les paliers supérieurs de gouvernements en fournissant des ressources matérielles et pédagogiques pour permettre aux intéressés de réaliser des améliorations; par exemple en appuyant des activités pour l'enfant ou en aidant les parents à aider les enfants. Les paliers organisationnels supérieurs en cause n'ont pas nécessairement besoin d'être des services gouvernementaux. Nic Nilsson, du Syndicat national suédois des locataires, illustre au moyen d'exemples graphiques comment une vaste organisation civique peut parfois offrir les mêmes stimulants que des paliers supérieurs de gouvernement.

5. Particularités régionales

Le dernier aspect est un contre-pied, mais qui s'impose. Les auteurs des exposés indiquent clairement qu'ils ne croient pas à des solutions universelles aux problèmes qui jouent au plan local et sont enracinés dans un contexte local et national plus large. Ainsi, Alegre montre comment certains des problèmes soulevés par le surpeuplement dans d'autres cultures sont vus sous un jour très différent par les Philippins, pour qui le rapprochement physique et la sociabilité individuelle sont importants.

Les climats sont un exemple évident de différences inspirant d'autres solutions aux problèmes. Ainsi, Churchman souligne que beaucoup de ses solutions ne découlent pas de lignes de pensée qui la séparent d'autres participants comme Raundalen, Sharonov ou Verwer; c'est simplement qu'Israel n'a pas le même climat que la Norvège, l'Union soviétique ou les Pays-Bas. Le mot intempérie n'a pas la même signification dans des régions différentes. Toutefois, ce que beaucoup d'exposés font ressortir, c'est qu'il faut tenir compte du climat et organiser l'aménagement en fonction de lui, au lieu de le reléguer au niveau de conscience inspiré par une minorité de journées chaudes et ensoleillées. C'est pourquoi Raundalen parle de la façon dont les Norvégiens prévoient les jeux au grand air pour les enfants en hiver, tandis que Sharonov fait des plans en fonction des conditions climatiques soviétiques qui empêchent de sortir.

Alam parle de la nécessité de prendre pour l'enfant des mesures en harmonie avec la culture traditionnelle, quoique cette dernière varie d'un pays à l'autre.

Il n'est pas besoin de s'attarder sur l'idée générale. Même s'il faut se pencher en permanence sur un certain nombre d'aspects afin de pouvoir prendre des mesures efficaces dans l'intérêt de l'enfant, les circonstances exactes influant sur le contexte d'une action déterminée seront uniques en leur genre.

En résumé, les exposés qui suivent ont beaucoup à dire à propos de l'espace urbain et des divers niveaux intéressant les enfants.

Cependant, leur utilité et la contribution nécessaire à une action efficace supposent la prise en considération d'au moins les cinq facteurs que nous venons d'exposer:

1) le développement de l'enfant;
2) l'espace;
3) le régime social;
4) politique et organisation;
5) particularités régionales.

Nous pensons pouvoir dire que cette prise de conscience de problèmes complexes est difficile et constructive et va ouvrir le chemin à de véritables améliorations.

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LES RIENS DE L'ECOLOGIE SOCIALE DE L'ENFANT*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Il y a une vingtaine d'années, on a publié un livre à grande diffusion sur les enfants qui s'intitulait Where Did You Go? Out. What Did You Do? Nothing. (Où es-tu allé? Quelque part. Qu'as-tu fait? Rien.) Plus récemment, Polly Hill[1] a exposé le problème d'un des auditeurs qui appela lors d'une émission téléphonique sur le logement familial et les jeux de l'enfant, organisée à Hamilton (Ontario):

> Et puis il y eut l'auditrice ... (qui) avait personnellement tout offert à ses enfants - la piscine et leur propre salle de jeux au sous-sol - et où préféraient-ils passer leur temps? "Dehors, nulle part, à ne rien faire, sans personne" (Polly Hill, 1978).

Ce sont ces riens de l'enfance qui m'intriguent particulièrement et dont je désire parler.

Ma thèse générale est que la richesse de l'enfance réside en grande partie dans les riens de la vie de tous les jours et qu'il est essentiel de pénétrer leur sens si l'on veut oeuvrer pour le bien-être des enfants. Le thème des riens de l'enfant va me servir plus particulièrement à mettre en relief certains problèmes que pose l'appréciation du bien-être des jeunes, à offrir une optique socio-écologique (Little et Ryan, 1978, 1979) dans laquelle pourraient s'interpréter ces problèmes, et à avancer une nouvelle technique méthodologique qui tente de les contourner.

II. VARIETES DE RIENS: LES RIENS PLAISANTS, EVASIFS ET CRITIQUES

Quand l'enfant dit qu'il ne fait rien, il peut vouloir dire différentes choses. Je me concentrerai ici sur trois des formes de riens les plus courantes que j'ai relevées en bavardant avec des enfants en qualité d'ami, de père et de psychologue.

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[1] Voir dans ce rapport l'exposé de Polly Hill "Organiser des possibilités de jeu pour l'enfant".

a) Les riens plaisants: codes et symboles personnels

Parfois les choses que nous disons et faisons, les actes que nous accomplissons et les projets et les plans que nous échafaudons sont si personnels, si intimes et si discrets que nous avons du mal à en parler en public ou à les expliquer normalement.

Ainsi, quand un enfant se contente de taper du pied dans des cailloux ou de caresser de la main le pare-choc qu'il vient de polir, on peut dire qu'il s'agit de riens plaisants. Ce sont des échanges agréables, désinvoltes et apparemment anodins entre l'enfant et son environnement qui procurent un plaisir secret, mais paraissent frivoles ou stupides quand il faut les expliquer. Expliqués, ces riens plaisants deviennent gênants à moins d'être questionnés par une personne réceptive dans un contexte convenable. J'avancerai qu'une bonne partie du plaisir que l'enfant tire de la vie urbaine est codé en des termes symboliques personnels qui sont rarement mentionnés, surtout à un expérimentateur ou un sondeur d'opinion. Je pense qu'à cause de cela nous échappe une mine de renseignements utiles pour l'aménagement urbain au profit de l'enfant, et qu'il existe des mesures à prendre pour tenter de saisir certains des aspects nébuleux les plus subtils de l'expérience de l'enfant avec le milieu.

L'enfant se trouve au centre d'un ensemble de systèmes convergents, qu'un collègue et moi-même avons définis (Little et Ryan, 1978, 1979) comme les systèmes biologique, social, culturel et physico-environnemental. Un des problèmes que posent les études actuelles sur l'enfant urbain vient de ce que les systèmes influant sur celui-ci sont régulièrement jaugés en fonction des orientations professionnelles des chercheurs. C'est ainsi que les architectes mettent l'accent sur l'aménagement physique des villes, les biologistes sur les effets toxiques de la pollution et les sociologues sur l'impact des normes de non-participation ou sur la place de l'enfant au sein des réseaux sociaux. Dans notre optique, nous nous concentrons sur le fait que c'est l'enfant qui jauge les différents aspects du milieu urbain en s'efforçant constamment de s'y adapter ou de le modifier. Ainsi, un objet ou un événement déterminé peut revêtir une importance symbolique particulière pour un enfant, parce qu'il occupe une place centrale dans les structures intégratrices de cet enfant. Même s'il peut paraître un élément mineur du point de vue de n'importe quelle discipline, le chaton d'Annick joue peut-être un rôle central dans sa façon d'intégrer les multiples systèmes qui la touchent, par exemple le manque de stimulation sociale de la part d'amis (système social) ou la poussée de l'adolescence (système biologique). C'est ce genre d'objets ou d'événements à propos desquels l'enfant éprouve souvent du mal à communiquer. Alors que "jouer avec le chat" peut être une façon simple et convenable d'expliquer ce qu'Annick est en train de faire dans sa chambre, dire "je hume sa fourrure et frotte mon nez contre son dos tout en regardant mon frère à travers son duvet blanc" ne l'est peut-être pas. La première explication, incapable semble-t-il de traduire le côté émotionnel de la relation, ne sera peut-être jamais donnée parce qu'elle est trop simple; la seconde sera peut-être tue, tellement elle paraît bizarre. Alors qu'était en train de faire Annick dans sa chambre hier soir? Rien.

Quand on tente de tirer des conclusions à propos du cadre de vie de l'enfant, il est indispensable de creuser son système particulier d'interprétation. On ne peut apprécier la valeur de ses riens qu'en se servant de ses interprétations personnelles comme points de repère.

Une technique pour ce faire est l'analyse matricielle (Kelly, 1955, Ravenette, 1975). Bien que cette démarche soit très utile pour élucider les codes personnels de signification, les matrices ont tendance à fournir des données sous une forme que l'on pourrait qualifier d'exagérément adjectivale. Les riens plaisants de l'enfant sont généralement des événements, des actions et des suites de comportements. Il faut ici l'explication de verbes personnellement pertinents et de qualificatifs.

Permettez-moi maintenant de préciser les problèmes que nous posons au sujet de l'évaluation du bien-être de l'enfant. Dans une optique socio-écologique, on peut fixer comme objectifs à l'évaluation:

1. la nécessité d'examiner l'influence des divers écosystèmes et éléments du milieu tels que les jauge subjectivement l'enfant;
2. la nécessité d'assurer que les éléments personnellement codés peuvent être communiqués (qu'ils ne sont pas considérés frivoles) et un moyen de stimuler la production de tels éléments (par le biais de métaphores, par exemple);
3. la nécessité de permettre à l'enfant de coder son expérience en termes idiosyncratiques (interprétations à la fois adjectivales et verbales).

Je ferai maintenant quelques commentaires à propos d'un nouvel instrument d'évaluation - l'analyse des projets personnels - qui semble répondre aux critères ci-dessus et à ceux considérés plus loin. Cette technique, initialement conçue pour des adultes (Little, 1978), a été récemment adaptée pour les enfants.

Dans l'analyse des projets personnels, on commence par demander à l'intéressé d'indiquer dans la large colonne de gauche d'une feuille divisée en plusieurs colonnes dix projets personnels du moment. On donne quelques exemples de ce que l'on entend par projet personnel (ce sera notamment pour l'enfant "aider ma mère à fabriquer la marionnette", "ne pas embêter mon frère", "gagner cinq livres", "surveiller la croissance de mes guppies", "rédiger mon compte rendu sur l'environnement"). A souligner que l'on laisse à l'enfant énormément de latitude. Après avoir énuméré les dix projets, l'intéressé cote dans chaque cas, d'après une échelle de valeurs allant généralement de 1 à 10, le plaisir procuré, le niveau de difficulté, l'impression de contrôle, l'endroit et les personnes associées au projet, la prééminence de celui-ci, par exemple. De plus on a prévu des schémas catégoriels d'analyse du contenu, ainsi qu'une matrice de recoupement d'impacts, dont on parlera plus loin, afin d'étudier les conflits personnels et interpersonnels engendrés par les projets.

En ce qui concerne les "riens plaisants", l'analyse de projets peut être utile de deux manières. Tout d'abord, les projets proprement dits peuvent être suffisamment personnels pour que les aspects les plus subtils, et importants au plan affectif, de l'expérience de l'intéressé avec le milieu soient encodés directement. En donnant de nombreux exemples idiosyncratiques, on peut connaître avec des adultes et, croyons-nous, des enfants un pourcentage assez élevé de projets de ce genre.

Un sondage plus intensif dans le domaine des projets est permis par deux techniques traditionnelles que nous appelons la sériation droite-gauche (left and right laddering) et l'énumération des symboles personnels. Dans la sériation droite, on demande à l'enfant d'indiquer dans des colonnes, à droite de chaque projet, la démarche à suivre pour le mener à bien; dans la sériation gauche, on lui demande le "pourquoi" de chaque projet et l'enfant donne ses raisons. Après avoir indiqué le "pourquoi" (par exemple, il joue au football pour être en forme), l'intéressé est prié d'expliquer le pourquoi du parce que, et ainsi de suite, jusqu'à ce que l'on obtienne une valeur finale ou une fin en soi.

En ce qui concerne les riens plaisants, la seconde technique traditionnelle - l'énumération des symboles personnels - semble la plus indiquée. Cette fois, nous demandons à l'enfant de penser à des choses qu'il associe à un projet donné, comme des odeurs, des goûts, des sentiments, de la musique et des motifs visuels. Le projet d'une fille qui était à "travailler sur mon projet d'étude du milieu" était associé d'un symbole très prononcé - l'odeur de biscuits aux brisures de chocolat dans la cuisine où elle travailla pendant deux semaines. Pour un autre enfant, le grand symbole du projet "jouer au hockey avec papa" était "l'odeur de la rondelle"; de fait, ce petit garçon était presque passé maître dans l'art de renifler en douce la rondelle entre les mises en jeu.

Enfin, nous demandons aux plus âgés des intéressés d'évaluer dans quelle mesure ils s'identifient à chacun de leurs projets. L'enfant "sent" parfois certains projets, et pas d'autres. Une conclusion intéressante, mais encore très sommaire, faite avec les adultes est que plus les symboles associés sont vivaces, plus l'intéressé s'identifie au projet. L'analyse des projets personnels, en perçant les codes et symboles de l'enfant, aide à comprendre les riens plaisants et les facteurs complexes entrant dans le bien-être des jeunes.

b) Les riens évasifs

Alors que les riens plaisants posent pourrait-on dire comme problème d'être ineffables, les riens évasifs sont des choses dont l'enfant pourrait parler, mais qu'il préfère taire. Ce sont les riens qui incitent les parents à se précipiter en haut pour voir ce qui se passe vraiment. Les riens évasifs attirent l'attention sur le fait que des actions de l'enfant vont inévitablement entrer en conflit à un moment donné avec d'autres actions, à la fois de lui et d'autres personnes.

Même si nous pouvons convenir que les conflits posent un problème clé dans l'aménagement urbain au profit de l'enfant, il est déroutant

de noter à quel point avec les enfants les techniques d'évaluation nous renseignent peu sur les aspects conflictuels, ou au contraire harmonieux, des projets. L'appréciation du bien-être de l'enfant consiste en effet généralement en une évaluation globale de la qualité de la vie ou du degré de satisfaction: on se penche rarement sur les rapports d'équilibre qui amènent l'appréciation finale quantifiée. Or, ici, l'analyse de projets fait plusieurs choses pour permettre l'étude des conflits entre projets.

Tout d'abord, nous pouvons étudier les conflits au sein du système de projets d'un individu, en faisant remplir à l'enfant une matrice de recoupement d'impacts où chaque projet est associé à chaque autre et où l'intéressé indique si le travail sur un projet aide (+), aide vraiment (++), contre-carre (-) ou contre-carre vraiment (--) chacun des autres. Une fois la matrice remplie, on peut voir clairement les articulations conflictuelles et harmonieuses dans la configuration générale des projets de la personne.

Une des sources de conflits les plus souvent relevées dans les matrices de recoupement d'impacts est le besoin de transport imposé par la distanciation des projets dans l'espace (Martensson, 1977). On peut mettre le doigt là-dessus dans l'analyse des projets personnels, en regardant les colonnes où les enfants indiquent l'emplacement de leurs projets et évaluent directement la corrélation entre les distances et les conflits perçus.

L'enfant va souvent préférer ne pas parler d'un projet ou d'un acte particulier parce qu'il se rend compte qu'il entre en conflit avec les projets d'une autre personne, fréquemment d'un adulte. Ce genre de conflit est formellement illustré par l'analyse au travers de la matrice des projets combinés. Il s'agit d'une matrice où sont énumérés en haut les projets d'une personne et sur le côté ceux d'une autre. On détermine alors les articulations conflictuelles et harmonieuses comme avec la matrice des projets individuels. Les matrices combinantes offrent donc un moyen d'apprécier l'harmonie globale d'un ensemble d'interactions individuelles.

Par son approche matricielle, la technique permet d'atteindre un certain nombre des objectifs de l'évaluation socio-écologique, en dehors de ceux déjà mentionnés. En étudiant la corrélation entre les projets de l'enfant et ceux d'autres personnes dans le cadre du milieu, elle permet d'apprécier directement l'aspect interactions des comportements quotidiens de l'enfant. L'évaluation psychologique traditionnelle considère généralement ces interactions comme un problème théorique, mais se fonde sur des démarches méthodologiques essentiellement inadaptées (comme l'étude des effets d'interaction dans l'analyse des variantes d'aménagements) pour tirer des conclusions empiriques. De plus, les interactions évaluées sont extrapolées au niveau personnel, individuel. Elles concernent non pas de manière très large les "choses" qui vous déplaisent à propos de votre école, mais la façon dont "votre travail à la maison" interagit avec "votre amitié avec Isabelle". En partant de projets qui, aux dires de l'enfant lui-même, le touchent de près, nous en arrivons à étudier des interactions pertinentes d'une manière méthodique, et non des interactions sans rapport d'une façon machinale.

On pourrait également indiquer qu'il serait très bon que l'évaluation socio-écologique profite dans une certaine mesure aux interrogés. Nous avons noté que le fait de se plier à l'analyse semble éclaircir certains des problèmes et embarras de la vie de tous les jours, à coup sûr chez l'adolescent et probablement chez l'enfant plus jeune. Un des points forts de la technique réside dans les solutions d'amélioration que l'intéressé se voit directement offrir. Ainsi, des projets qui semblent avoir une interaction particulièrement négative avec d'autres peuvent être étudiés et réaménagés en collaboration avec l'enfant; des projets qui entrent en conflit avec la plupart de ceux du reste de la famille peuvent être analysés et déplacés ou réorganisés éventuellement afin de mieux s'harmoniser. Bref, l'analyse de projets conduit directement à ce que l'on pourrait normalement appeler une action thérapeutique ou orientatrice. Néanmoins, au lieu de considérer qu'il est perturbé par des problèmes "inhérents", nous considérons que l'enfant est perturbant à cause de problèmes d'organisation découlant de moyens limités. Quand ces moyens deviennent sérieusement restreints, on se trouve confronté à un autre genre de riens et ce troisième type de riens nous éloigne un peu du problème de l'enfant pour nous orienter sur celui du milieu environnant.

c) Les riens critiques

Même si la question de savoir si l'on peut vraiment ne rien faire va continuer à intriguer les philosophes de l'écologie, la chose manifestement navrante est que beaucoup d'enfants pâtissent de moyens limités. Leurs riens ne sont ni ineffables, ni évasifs, mais réels et critiques.

Les sciences du comportement continuent en général à considérer largement un renforcement du contrôle perçu comme un facteur clé dans l'amélioration du bien-être de l'enfant. La condition que je tiens à mettre à ce sentiment renforcé de contrôle est qu'il s'appuie sur une conscience précise des moyens disponibles et des contraintes imposées au sein de l'écosystème ambiant. L'analyse de projets cherche à faciliter l'identification des possibilités et des contraintes en faisant dresser à chaque intéressé un inventaire des moyens en relation avec la matrice des projets. L'inventaire des moyens (différenciés en fonction du milieu physique, humain, etc.) amène l'individu à passer en revue les ressources potentielles, non exploitées, susceptibles de l'aider à échafauder son système de projets, ainsi qu'à déterminer les fusionnements ou échanges entre projets susceptibles d'être organisés avec d'autres personnes dans le même milieu. Bien que nous n'en sommes qu'au stade préliminaire[1], cet aspect de nos travaux semble offrir des possibilités prometteuses pour les projets communautaires, du point de vue des besoins et des moyens révélés pour les projets au niveau individuel.

La notion des riens critiques provient donc de la constatation que les individus manquent souvent de moyens pour les projets qui leur importent. On peut aider certaines personnes à découvrir des ressources sous-

[1] A cet égard, je tiens à remercier Ted Palys, Diana Sheng et Rosemary Doyle pour leur collaboration respective à l'inventaire communautaire, l'inventaire des ressources humaines et la théorie générale des ressources.

exploitées (allant de grands-parents adoptifs à une piscine inutilisée dans le cas de Hamilton, Ontario). Les projets cruciaux pour d'autres, comme dans le cas du tiers-monde, sont des projets qui sont indispensables à la survie (avoir suffisamment à manger ou un toit sur sa tête). Bien qu'il soit ridicule d'imaginer de demander à ces enfants de dresser un inventaire des ressources, le passage en revue des moyens disponibles en collaboration avec eux et dans leur intérêt est formellement identique. Bien qu'il n'entre pas dans le sujet de cet exposé de recommander une démarche de développement communautaire pour le tiers-monde ou les régions pauvres du monde industrialisé[1], l'existence de riens navrants dans l'univers de l'enfant me fait passer à mon dernier grand point: la nécessité de développer un sentiment d'interdépendance entre les enfants des divers régions du globe.

L'enfant a besoin de développer un sentiment d'interdépendance avec son milieu physique et social afin de préserver son bien-être. Une façon d'essayer de comprendre le sentiment d'interdépendance est de découvrir ce qu'il perçoit de bien et de mal dans le milieu et comment il conçoit une société idéale. Certaines explorations préliminaires dans cette voie sont brièvement mentionnées ailleurs (Little, 1979).

Peut-être que la grande idée qui s'impose quand on tente d'aborder le problème des riens critiques de l'enfance est la nécessité de prendre l'enfant au sérieux dans son rôle de régisseur de notre futur écosystème. Si nous ne parvenons pas à développer chez lui une attitude plus féconde envers les ressources limitées de la terre, les riens critiques vont se muer en riens catastrophiques dans quelques décennies.

Un projet que mes collègues et moi-même désirons creuser dans l'année qui vient est de faire collaborer des enfants à des modèles utopiques, tout d'abord au niveau du quartier, puis à l'échelon national et enfin à l'échelle internationale, au travers d'un petit groupe échantillonné. Notre objectif est de découvrir quels glissements vers l'interdépendance risqueraient de se produire si les enfants devaient transposer leur conception de l'avenir idéal à la réalité contextuelle d'idées, de valeurs et de ressources différentes. Parallèlement, l'organisation d'échanges en matière de projets entre enfants de diverses régions, au travers d'un système du genre correspondance, semblerait présenter des possibilités intéressantes pour le développement d'un sentiment d'interdépendance.

III. OBSERVATIONS EN CONCLUSION

J'ai cherché ici à montrer comment les riens de l'enfant mettent en lumière les problèmes que pose actuellement l'aménagement de son environnement. Je n'ai abordé que quelques-uns des riens qui paraissent caractéristiques. Un autre genre de rien important dont je n'ai pas eu le

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[1] On pourrait toutefois faire remarquer qu'un bon nombre des principes et des procédés que nous appliquons dans la méthodologie relative aux projets sont utilisés au plan du développement communautaire par l'Institut des affaires culturelles, et que nous voyons une possibilité très prometteuse dans une intégration de ces démarches axée sur les besoins de l'enfant.

loisir de parler est celui par lequel l'enfant montre qu'il ne parvient pas à voir de l'importance dans ce qu'il fait. En disant "Je n'ai rien fait", il peut en effet souvent vouloir dire que ses activités ont été désespérément insignifiantes et ne méritent aucun effort d'explication.

J'ai voulu en outre situer le cadre de travail socio-écologique et la méthodologie d'analyse des projets que mes collègues de Carleton et moi-même avons mis au point. Nous espérons parvenir à rendre les riens plaisants de l'enfant plus communicables en l'aidant à nous expliquer ses codes personnels. Nous espérons le faire communiquer plus facilement ses riens évasifs car notre méthodologie vise à l'aider (et pas seulement à sonder) dans ses projets et ses aspirations. Enfin, nous espérons que les riens critiques de l'enfance régresseront dans la mesure où l'on combinera des techniques inventives (sans parler de mesures politiques courageuses) pour dégager de nouvelles ressources, peut-être insoupçonnées. Nous sommes en droit d'espérer pour le moins que cette génération d'enfants va commencer à développer le sentiment d'interdépendance nécessaire à une éducation plus efficace de la suivante. Même si seulement une petite partie de ces voeux sont exaucés, alors l'étude des riens de l'enfance aura servir à quelque chose.

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TROUVER UN MOYEN DE S'EN SORTIR

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Nous vivons à l'étroit, comme en cage", se plaint un professeur du primaire à la retraite. "Cela exaspère l'enfant. Il ne peut pas jouer. Nous sommes comme des prisonniers en liberté. La seule solution est de s'échapper."

Mais, comment s'échapper? Où aller? La situation des enfants vivant à Athènes a été qualifiée de "proprement insupportable": ils n'ont pas d'endroits où jouer entre eux, pas d'espaces à eux.

Athènes, qui n'était qu'un village d'environ 4000 habitants quand on en a fait la capitale de la Grèce libérée du joug turc, est devenue en l'espace de 150 ans une ville de plus de trois millions d'âmes. Elle a dû faire face à de brusques afflux de gens: réfugiés d'Asie mineure et d'autres contrées, migrants d'après-guerre et, depuis la Deuxième guerre mondiale, arrivants permanents en quête d'une vie meilleure - une attente qui n'est plus nécessairement comblée.

L'urbanisme n'a servi qu'à fixer des limites et des normes. La plupart des projets de développement se sont fait en dehors des limites légales de la ville. Le résultat - une série de maisons desservies par un minimum d'infrastructures - est une création spontanée des gens, mais les avantages ne sont pas toujours évidents pour le résident.

Nous nous heurtons notamment aux problèmes suivants: appartements mal conçus où l'esthétique prime sur le confort; règlements de construction inadaptés et mal appliqués, d'où un lésinement sur la sécurité; manque d'espace tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur. Rien n'est prévu pour les mères de jeunes enfants, obligées d'affronter avec poussettes et bambins des cages d'escaliers et des obstacles en tous genres sur le trottoir (détritus, trous, motos et autos). Insuffisance ou absence de terrains de jeux à proximité; piètre aménagement ou inacessibilité de parcs, avec souvent des

attractions n'offrant rien de constructif à l'enfant: tout cela étrique son environnement. Avec les embouteillages et les passages piétonniers peu sûrs, même aux feux rouges, circuler loin du domicile devient une expérience effrayante et dangereuse pour le plus indépendant des enfants. C'est ainsi que beaucoup de petits Athéniens restent isolés dans leurs appartements, manquent de camarades de jeu et ont peu de loisirs, même le dimanche. Les sorties en fin de semaine pourraient leur faire du bien, mais même cette perspective n'a rien d'attirant parce que les autobus sont bondés et étouffants, que les enfants paient plein tarif et que les routes sont encombrées. La solution est souvent de se mettre sur son trente et un et de rendre visite ou d'aller au café manger des glaces. Cet état de chose ne satisfait personne; pourtant peu de gens considèrent qu'il leur incombe d'agir pour y remédier.

II. CAUSES D'INACTION

Qu'est-ce qui nous empêche de refuser d'admettre autre chose qu'une urbanisation et une affectation des fonds judicieuses et rationnelles, qu'une attitude attentive? Qu'est-ce qui nous empêche de voir en face la condition de nos enfants et d'exiger le respect de leurs droits?

a) L'ignorance

Je vois ici l'action de deux facteurs.

1. Nous ne sommes tout simplement pas conscients des besoins de nos enfants parce que notre propre enfance a été escamotée. Beaucoup d'entre nous qui ont de jeunes enfants ont vu leur enfance marquée par la guerre. En Grèce, la Deuxième guerre mondiale et l'occupation allemande ont été suivies d'une guerre civile qui a eu un effet désastreux sur ceux qui l'ont connue. Mais même dans le meilleur de cas, rares sont les enfants où que ce soit qui ont le droit d'être enfants - gais, pleinement maîtres de leurs actes, aimants, joueurs, actifs, libres et sûrs de leurs droits. C'est pourquoi l'enfant devient adulte sans se rendre compte en quoi pourrait consister ou consiste vraiment l'enfance.

2. A cause de cela, et c'est là un autre facteur très important, on minimise les problèmes et les besoins de l'enfant. A ses besoins, les dirigeants n'accordent pas une grande priorité car ils en ont une idée vague et confuse. Il y a toutes les chances pour qu'ils ne connaissent pas la vie de tous les jours avec un enfant et, par conséquent, les problèmes qu'elle pose à l'enfant et la personne qui s'en occupe; ce sont généralement des hommes pour qui la charge de l'enfant est l'affaire de la femme, et non du gouvernement ou de la société. De plus, les responsables des finances ou des affaires municipales vivent mieux d'ordinaire que la majorité des gens et n'ont donc pas idée des besoins des familles à faible revenu dont ils pensent cependant pouvoir se faire le porte-parole. Ils consacrent les fonds à des problèmes qui paraissent plus pressants, en se rendant mal compte semble-t-il qu'ils exposent les gens (dont ils font partie) à des conditions de vie inacceptables.

b) L'apathie

Là aussi, le problème provient de notre enfance. Etant enfants, nous avons progressivement perdu tout sentiment de pouvoir pour deux raisons au moins:

1. Nous n'avons jamais eu, sauf peut-être dans le ventre maternel ou à la naissance, l'initiative. Les grandes personnes nous ont rarement prêté vraiment l'oreille ou donné des responsabilités. Notre vie et son cadre ont été organisés de façon à convenir à nos parents ou aux grandes personnes.

   Le système pédagogique a perpétué cette oppression. On nous a refusé le droit à la parole, punis pour nos erreurs ou nos initiatives au lieu de montrer de la compréhension, et fait apprendre sous la contrainte, souvent par crainte de l'échec, dans un système où il faut réussir. Le fait que les responsables de l'éducation et de la charge des jeunes sont mal conscients de leur pouvoir et qu'ils ont un rôle ingrat ne fait rien pour arranger les choses. Le sentiment d'impuissance est entretenu au service militaire et au travail, où les valeurs, les préjugés et les penchants des chefs et des collègues dissuadent les remises en question. Le foyer est généralement le seul endroit où l'on puisse se sentir puissant, face aux petits, et ceux-ci apprennent rapidement qu'il ne vaut mieux pas se rebiffer contre les injustices.

2. Nous n'avons pas eu autour de nous d'exemples d'adultes prenant l'initiative. Peu d'entre nous ont eu des parents - quels que fussent leurs accomplissements par ailleurs - qui s'en sont montrés capables dans ce rôle. Nous n'avons aussi rien vu de fait publiquement pour nous. Le rôle soumis accepté par les femmes en est une illustration manifeste. L'ironie est que la société confie son plus précieux atout à la personne qu'elle sous-estime le plus. On voit la mère comme quelqu'un de pas mûr, d'un peu effacé et d'incompétent dans presque tous les domaines, y compris les questions financières. Celle-ci se fait le plus souvent à l'idée et vaque à ses occupations, en n'ayant aucune confiance en elle et en ses aptitudes, en minimisant le travail et l'incroyable énergie qu'elle consacre à sa famille avec peu d'aide. Tant que les hommes ne participeront pas de plus près à l'éducation des enfants, dans l'intérêt des deux, les femmes resteront la principale influence dans le développement de l'enfant. Il est essentiel de les encourager à réaliser leur importance, à être fières de leur rôle et à avoir confiance en elle. Cela aura des retombées immédiates sur l'enfant.

c) La crainte

La crainte est un puissant facteur d'inhibition. Quand on vit dans un pays où à une époque le simple fait de mentionner que les choses pourraient être autrement risquait de vous faire ficher, il n'est pas facile, même maintenant, de dire tout haut ce que l'on pense. Cette crainte joue plus ou moins dans tous les pays. C'est la crainte d'être le seul à revendiquer, de commettre une erreur, d'échouer, d'être réprouvé.

d) Les autres pressions

Bien des gens sont trop occupés à diriger le ménage, à pourvoir aux besoins de la famille, à s'en sortir avec leur argent, à gagner suffisamment pour vivre ou mieux vivre (ce qui suppose parfois un autre emploi le soir). Cela leur laisse peu de temps ou d'énergie à consacrer à d'autres activités.

III. ACTION COMMUNAUTAIRE

Par conséquent, pour que les gens sentent leur force, nous devons faire tomber leur sentiment d'impuissance, leur conviction que se battre pour de meilleures conditions ne vaut pas la peine. Certains y parviennent en donnant l'exemple. On peut compter sur eux pour mobiliser des résidents contre un projet de construction; ils réclament en permanence des améliorations pour leur quartier; ils arrivent souvent à leurs fins. Bien que ce genre d'action rende optimiste, la nécessité d'agir disparaît en même temps que le problème.

Les groupes d'action communautaire attirent beaucoup de gens au moyen de "rencontres" où sont offerts des divertissements pour tous les âges et débattues les questions importantes pour la communauté. L'objet est d'organiser des activités agréables et constructives, lors desquelles les résidents peuvent se rencontrer et se découvrir les mêmes problèmes et besoins.

Une femme en encourage d'autres à poser leur candidature à l'association des parents de leur école (ces organismes ne s'occupent officiellement que des questions d'entretien) et les informe pour leur permettre d'améliorer les conditions une fois membres. De cette façon, elle est en train de mobiliser des femmes sensibilisées et agissantes qui vont pouvoir à leur tour en encourager et en inspirer d'autres. Elle organise actuellement un groupement féminin qui va épauler ces femmes et en aider éventuellement d'autres à participer aux affaires communautaires.

Toutefois, bien des groupements risquent de ne rester qu'un petit cercle de gens qui discutent entre eux au lieu d'en sensibiliser d'autres sans qui aucune action efficace n'est possible. Parfois, mobiliser a dû devenir une fin en soi. Les membres se sont lancés dans le porte-à-parole ou le débat au marché. Les gens sympathisent en général, mais ne s'engagent pas. On entend souvent dire: "en quoi cela me concerne-t-il?" Il importe par conséquent de trouver les problèmes préoccupant le plus les résidents et de gagner, par le contact personnel, leur confiance pour les convaincre que collectivement les gens peuvent faire beaucoup. Un programme ou un plan mûrement pensé qui émane d'une communauté dynamique risque d'être mieux accueilli par les autorités que des revendications isolées de particuliers.

Le fait même que des gens s'inquiètent et agissent occulte peut-être les problèmes de ceux qui restent inactifs et néanmoins mécontents de la situation inchangée. Les personnes qui ont le temps, l'information et

les moyens (financiers ou autres) pour pouvoir agir au sein d'un groupement n'offrent peut-être pas des orientations et des buts propres à trouver un écho chez les gens moins aisés, moins conscients ou en proie à des problèmes négligés par le groupement. Il se peut aussi que les positions adoptées au sein du groupe aillent trop loin pour des gens moins instruits ou moins confiants.

Qui sont donc ces gens qui mobilisent des résidents autour d'une cause, organisent des groupes d'action ou encouragent les autres à agir? Les femmes et les hommes ayant une action communautaire, avec qui je me suis entretenue, se disent assurés, entreprenants, heureux de participer aux affaires de la communauté, prêts à relever le défi et clairement conscients de leurs droits. Ajoutez à cela "sensibles" et l'on obtient, je crois, les qualités que nous aimerions tous avoir et trouver chez nos enfants.

Je me demande combien de gens qui ont l'information et les moyens pour agir dans l'intérêt de leurs enfants ou de leur communauté s'y emploient en fait. Nous qui travaillons avec ou pour les enfants devons scruter nos attitudes et préjugés et refuser de nous associer à l'oppression subtile et tenace dont sont victimes les enfants et d'autres groupes par suite des inégalités et des préjugés régnant dans la société d'aujourd'hui. En exigeant de chacun un comportement rationnel, sans se laisser arrêter par l'apathie, la crainte et le découragement, nous serons pour nos enfants l'exemple dont ils ont besoin. Par la même occasion, nous nous mettrons sur-le-champ à corriger certains des comportements et des attitudes déformées que nos enfants en sont arrivés à considérer comme normaux. C'est pourquoi, à tous les urbanistes qui font de leur mieux, les sociologues et psychologues qui sont conscients et soucieux des problèmes, les politiciens qui cherchent à ce que les choses marchent bien, les individus qui s'efforcent d'améliorer les communautés et les parents attentionnés qui veulent le progrès, je lancerai un appel: ne pratiquons pas la politique de l'autruche; attaquons-nous aux injustices, toutes insignifiantes qu'elles puissent paraître; ayons le respect le plus absolu pour tous les humains et exigeons la même chose de et pour tout et chacun. Nous méritons tous le meilleur de la vie.

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L'INFLUENCE DU MILIEU FAMILIAL SUR LA SOCIALISATION DE L'ENFANT

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Ces dernières années, de plus en plus de recherches ont été faites sur l'environnement et le comportement. Au début, elles se sont surtout circonscrites à des études en laboratoire, visant à déterminer si le comportement noté chez des animaux pouvait se retrouver chez l'homme. Plus récemment, on s'est employé à remédier aux lacunes théoriques qui dévalorisaient les précédentes études. Même maintenant, on ne fait pas encore suffisamment de recherches pour dégager des recommandations concrètes sur l'aménagement et notamment, par exemple, sur les milieux répondant aux besoins de l'enfant.

Je me propose ici avant tout d'examiner l'évolution historique du cadre de vie de l'enfant afin de remettre quelque peu en cause nos idées actuelles sur la corrélation entre le cadre architectural et les besoins sociaux. Cette démarche me paraît particulièrement judicieuse pour aborder le problème du surpeuplement, que j'approfondirai plus loin. Je tâcherai de ne pas me contenter de faire des observations sur les effets d'intégration sociale du cadre architectural, qui doivent par la force des choses rester abstraites. Je m'efforcerai d'en préciser les implications du point de vue de l'aménagement du milieu familial de l'enfant.

I. LES CONDITIONS DE VIE DE L'ENFANT A TRAVERS L'HISTOIRE

Le cadre que l'on appelle le foyer est souvent vu comme le siège de la vie familiale chez l'homme et la fonction centrale dans la vie familiale est, considère-t-on, de s'occuper des enfants. Pour beaucoup de gens, cette fonction semble quasi naturelle, commune à toutes les cultures et toutes les époques. Ceci toutefois ne correspond pas à la réalité. J'aimerai ci-dessous corriger cette notion en évoquant plusieurs changements profonds qui se sont produits au cours des deux derniers siècles. Les corrélations entre l'évolution socio-économique des structures du foyer et la condition de l'enfant au sein de la famille, d'une part, et l'évolution de l'aménagement du cadre de vie physique, d'autre part, semblent particulièrement intéressantes à cet égard. Des modes de vie caractéristiques se sont formés à différentes époques; leur cause et leur évolution peuvent être considérées comme la résultante de processus de socialisation socio-spatiale (Ariès, 1975; De Mause, 1976; Elias, 1969; Zinn, 1979).

a) Le foyer et le cadre de vie au moyen âge

Au moyen âge, vivre et travailler n'étaient pas deux fonctions dissociées dans l'espace. L'unité prédominante n'était pas la famille, mais la maisonnée; elle comprenait souvent un grand nombre de domestiques, de journaliers et d'artisans. Il est probable que la plupart des plus petits fiefs n'eurent jamais de maisonnée. A l'intérieur de ces petites communautés d'habitation et de travail, tout le monde partageait d'ordinaire la même demeure: maître, maîtresse, enfants, domestiques et ouvriers. En règle générale, les membres de toute condition de la maisonnée mangeaient, travaillaient, s'amusaient, célébraient et dormaient ensemble; cet état de chose n'était pas considéré comme un problème social.

L'enfant était vu d'abord et avant tout comme de la main-d'oeuvre et un héritier en puissance. Il ne serait jamais venu à l'idée de la considérer comme un être avec des émotions et des besoins propres, à une époque où une forte mortalité infantile était normale. Généralement, un enfant de la haute société était élevé par une nourrice. Dans le meilleur des cas, l'enfant ne restait auprès de ses parents qu'entre l'âge de deux et sept ans. Après quoi, quelle que fusse sa condition, il était envoyé en apprentissage, d'habitude dans une autre maisonnée. Dans la vie médiévale, les gens de tous âges partageaient les mêmes activités; aucun espace n'était réservé pour l'enfant en particulier.

Les pièces où vivaient les gens de l'époque pourraient être qualifiées de pièces à tout faire. Elles avaient rarement un usage bien précis et distinct; elles étaient généralement contiguës de sorte que la plupart du temps, pour aller dans l'une, il fallait en traverser d'autres. Avec un tel agencement, il n'y avait pas d'isolement et, donc, d'intimité possibles; mais les gens de l'époque ne ressentaient pas un besoin d'intimité individuelle ou familiale, et il n'y avait pas non plus de pièces communautaires spéciales. Jusqu'au XVIe siècle, les lits étaient souvent démontables et remontés le soir. L'adoption de lits massifs au XVIIe peut s'interpréter comme l'expression d'un besoin grandissant d'intimité; elle annonçait une tendance bourgeoise qui allait faire coucher à part famille et domesticité, et séparer plus tard pièces de séjour et chambres.

b) La famille cellulaire et le cadre de vie bourgeois

Avec l'industrialisation et la montée de la moyenne bourgeoisie, le foyer cessa petit à petit d'être en même temps le lieu de travail. Il n'hébergea plus que la famille proprement dite. Les gens de condition inférieure purent alors avoir leur propre famille et leur propre foyer, même si beaucoup restèrent longtemps au service de la moyenne et de la haute bourgeoisie.

La famille bourgeoise se vit comme un cercle "intime". Elle fuit l'attention publique - une attitude tout à fait nouvelle - et se replia sur elle-même. Brusquement, il ne se fit pas de rendre visite à des amis ou des associés sans préavis. On vit naître l'étiquette destinée à protéger la vie privée de l'individu et de la famille. Le besoin ressenti par la famille de se cloisonner socialement imposa un nouvel aménagement de l'espace.

L'agencement du domicile bourgeois se modifia après le XVIIIe siècle. On individualisa le foyer. Il n'y eut plus de pièces communicantes, à tout faire, mais des pièces séparées, aménagées de part et d'autre d'une entrée, et offrant donc des possibilités d'isolement et une protection contre les intrusions. Simultanément, les quartiers privés s'agrandirent au détriment des pièces de réception.

Les rapports entre famille et domesticité se modifièrent avec l'apparition d'un mode de vie propre à la bourgeoisie. On vécu dans des pièces séparées. On eut dorénavant, chose symbolique, la sonnette dans le séjour. C'était un signe de l'éclatement de la société hiérarchique du moyen âge. Tant que l'ordre social avait conservé une forte légitimité, des cloisons physiques n'avaient pas été nécessaires. Maintenant que s'imposait le principe bourgeois de l'égalité des droits, les inégalités qui subsistaient encore perdaient leur légitimité; d'où le besoin de se différencier par des symboles. Et comme une étroite cohabitation avec le personnel de maison ne cadrait pas avec ce besoin, la bourgeoisie se démarqua de la classe inférieure montante par une ségrégation physique.

L'isolement accru de la famille bourgeoise renforça automatiquement les liens entre parents et enfants. L'individualité de l'enfant et l'épanouissement de ses talents devinrent encore plus importants. Malgré tout, ce ne fut pas avant la fin du XIXe siècle qu'il devint coutumier pour des enfants de la haute société d'avoir une chambre à eux, suffisamment spacieuse pour jouer et faire leurs devoirs. Le pas suivant - une chambre par enfant - ne fut franchi qu'au début du siècle, même dans la haute société. Probablement qu'à l'origine l'attribution de chambres séparées aux filles dans la haute société fut décidée par souci de moralité.

Il semble y avoir eu une étroite corrélation entre le nouvel agencement du foyer et le souci de la haute société de mettre des barrières autour de la vie sexuelle. Ainsi, même au XVIIIe siècle, le lit occupait encore une place centrale dans la vie de salon de la noblesse rococo. La bourgeoisie, toutefois, trouva cette coutume décadente et relégua les lits dans des pièces annexes. Elle s'attacha à bannir toute effusion des rencontres professionnelles et sociales. Tout ce qui touchait la vie sexuelle devint secret, entouré d'une nouvelle barrière psychologique faite de honte et de gêne, qui se solda par des chambres cloisonnées. Les tabous concernant la chambre parentale, restés vivaces depuis le XIXe siècle, étaient censés faire croire à l'enfant que les parents menaient une vie conjugale pure, non sexuelle.

Ce ne fut que beaucoup plus tard que les couches inférieures adoptèrent ces habitudes. En effet, elles furent pendant longtemps trop défavorisées pour pouvoir s'organiser une vie familiale indépendante, à l'image de la haute société. D'ordinaire, les gens de condition inférieure logeaient dans une pièce, assortie dans le meilleur des cas d'une cloison ou d'une minuscule pièce supplémentaire. Vivre, cuisiner, faire le ménage, dormir et, pour les premiers artisans du capitalisme, travailler: ils faisaient tout entre ces murs; ces gens ne pouvaient pas se permettre une vie affective distincte, des moeurs raffinés et d'autres vertues nouvelles de l'existence bourgeoise, simplement parce qu'ils n'avaient pas un minimum d'intimité.

La petite bourgeoisie fut la première à tenter d'imiter le mode de vie bourgeois. Le petit salon - d'ordinaire une pièce de dimensions très modestes, mais bien meublée - symbolisa cette aspiration. Utilisé seulement le dimanche et dans les grandes occasions, il donna néanmoins l'impression à la famille de vivre comme les gens plus aisés. Le reste du logis se composait d'une ou deux chambres non chauffées, et d'une cuisine où la famille passait le plus clair de son temps. Une bonne partie des appartements en République fédérale d'Allemagne sont encore aujourd'hui de ce type; ils sont en train d'être progressivement remplacés par les appartements modernes à louer, du genre construit depuis la Deuxième guerre mondiale.

c) La situation de l'enfant d'aujourd'hui dans la famille et le foyer

En République fédérale d'Allemagne, les ménages avec des enfants de moins de quinze ans ne représentent plus qu'environ 30% de toutes les familles. La moyenne d'enfants par ménage est tombée de 1,7 à 0,6 entre 1871 et 1975. La famille avec des enfants n'est donc plus le ménage typique. Le ménage le plus courant est la famille petite ou cellulaire, composée d'un ou deux parents et d'enfants. Les familles qui comptent des grands-parents ou d'autres proches représentent maintenant moins de 3%. Les familles qui comptent également un ou deux domestiques, courantes au début du siècle, ont pratiquement disparu.

La plupart des fonctions socio-économiques de la famille ancienne ont été maintenant prises en charge par des institutions sociales. Des changements continuent à se produire dans la fonction familiale. Ce n'est que récemment que le foyer a cessé d'être le siège habituel de grands événements comme la naissance, la maladie ou la mort. Même dans les régions rurales, l'habitude de stocker pour des raisons économiques a régressé au cours de la dernière génération. Par ailleurs, de nouveaux appareils ménagers ont allégé le travail de maison. C'est ainsi que le foyer est devenu à tous égards synonyme d'intimité.

La socialisation des fonctions domestiques s'est accompagnée d'un confinement d'autres fonctions, corporelles (qui à une époque auraient pu s'accomplir en public plus ou moins sans gêne), à l'intimité. Ceci vaut non seulement pour la vie sexuelle, mais aussi pour d'autres fonctions essentielles. Si la salle de bain et les toilettes sont souvent séparées, c'est dû à cela.

La principale fonction sociale de la famille d'aujourd'hui est la socialisation primaire de la prochaine génération, c'est-à-dire élever et éduquer les enfants. Quand on examine si les appartements de location construits après la Deuxième guerre conviennent pour la socialisation des enfants, il ressort immédiatement que l'appartement moderne n'offre pas les facilités dont jouissait déjà au début du siècle la haute société. Avec son large séjour, sa cuisine fonctionnelle, sa salle de bain et ses toilettes, il reprend les aménagements typiques de la haute bourgeoisie. Cependant, la chambre des parents et les pièces des jeunes enfants ne peuvent pas être considérées comme des pièces individuelles au sens bourgeois. Les pièces des enfants, même si elles sont maintenant chauffées, ne sont généralement rien d'autre que des chambres, n'étant pas suffisamment spacieuses pour y jouer.

Les recherches ont montré que les plus jeunes enfants ont besoin à la fois d'un espace où jouer à proximité du gardien (généralement la mère) et d'un coin personnel, moins surveillé, et qu'ils doivent pouvoir se rendre librement d'un endroit à l'autre. Les appartements de la haute bourgeoisie étaient suffisamment spacieux pour cela et les gens de condition plus modeste avaient au moins la cuisine-séjour (Wohnküche) où l'enfant pouvait toujours jouer à proximité de sa mère. S'il lui fallait davantage d'espace, il allait dans la rue.

La cuisine-séjour fut remplacée par une cuisinette fonctionnelle dans les logements construits après la guerre. L'espace ainsi gagné devint une partie du salon. Malheureusement, la pièce se prête mal aux jeux de l'enfant; elle est généralement quelque peu à l'écart de l'endroit de travail de la mère, et interdite aux jeux à cause du mobilier coûteux. Il n'y a par conséquent plus d'espace où jouer à proximité de la mère dans les logements loués ou la plupart des maisons privées d'aujourd'hui.

Parallèlement, l'augmentation de la circulation a sérieusement limité la possibilité de jouer dans la rue près du domicile. Et, dernière considération mais non des moindres, faire le trajet entre l'appartement et les aires de jeux en plein air n'est pas exactement ce qu'il y a de plus facile pour l'enfant habitant dans les grands immeubles d'aujourd'hui. Tout bien considéré, les conditions dans lesquelles grandissent les jeunes enfants se sont à peine améliorées au cours des dernières années. On peut raisonnablement supposer que bien des enfants d'aujourd'hui sont assez fortement "disciplinés" dans leur foyer du fait de son aménagement, et donc empêchés d'apprendre à être autonomes. Une autre raison qui incite à discipliner les enfants est une sensibilité accrue à tout ce qui perturbe la vie privée, notamment à tout bruit causé par les voisins. C'est le principal sujet de querelle dans les habitations louées. C'est pourquoi l'insonorisation a pris une importance qui aurait été jugée inconcevable au siècle dernier.

On peut s'attendre à d'autres changements dans l'avenir. Il n'est pas improbable, par exemple, que les vestiges encore apparents de fonctions purement sociales finissent par disparaître complètement des foyers. La salle à manger, indispensable dans les maisons de la haute bourgeoisie il y a quelques décennies encore, est maintenant intégrée au salon ou à une aire de séjour à usages multiples, non loin de la cuisine. Cette aire marque la résurrection de la cuisine-séjour, sous forme d'une seconde salle de séjour. Parents et enfants aiment beaucoup cet agencement parce qu'il est possible de vivre sans les limitations du salon, encore fortement empreint d'une vocation sociale.

En réalité, le salon tant respecté en a pris un dur coup avec l'introduction de la télévision. De nouveau, les enfants ont eu une raison valable d'avoir accès à cette pièce. Cette intrusion a été facilitée par le fait de ne plus avoir à donner des soirées guindées à intervalles réguliers, comme il avait été coutumier de le faire dans les "meilleures" maisons. D'un point de vue objectif, il est paradoxal que l'on ait gardé la vieille habitude de meubler le salon le plus luxueusement possible et de le tenir méticuleusement propre en prévision d'une visite inattendue. On ne peut

dire pendant combien de temps encore cette habitude se perpétuera; c'est toutefois comme si se faisait sentir une lente évolution, qui devrait être par-dessus tout bénéfique pour l'enfant.

II. LE SURPEUPLEMENT ET LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'ENFANT

Comme en témoignent ces observations historiques, l'idée que l'on s'est faite du type d'espaces propice au développement de l'enfant a beaucoup changé avec le temps. Le genre d'éducation normale aujourd'hui, qui vise avant tout l'épanouissement et la préservation de la personnalité de l'enfant, n'aurait pas pu être assuré dans les maisons du moyen âge. Le fait qu'aujourd'hui, à une époque où la moyenne de l'espace de vie par individu n'a jamais été aussi élevée (tout au moins en Europe de l'Ouest), tant de familles avec plusieurs enfants ont l'impression de vivre "les uns sur les autres", démontre un sérieux changement d'attitude.

a) Le problème de logement des jeunes ménages

Actuellement, en République fédérale d'Allemagne, la norme veut que chaque membre du ménage ait sa propre pièce. Le fait est que de ce point de vue les jeunes ménages avec plusieurs enfants sont particulièrement mal lotis. La norme est atteinte en moyenne dans 90% des ménages. 99% des couples mariés sans enfants occupent des appartements de taille normale ou supérieure à la normale. En revanche, la norme n'est atteinte que par 86% des familles cellulaires avec deux enfants, 60% de celles avec trois enfants et 29% de celles avec quatre enfants, bien que la cuisine compte également pour une pièce; la situation des familles incomplètes est encore pire. Bref, on peut dire que près de la moitié des enfants de moins de dix-huit ans d'aujourd'hui vivent dans des conditions "anormales". Leur proportion excède 90% pour les familles à faible revenu avec quatre enfants ou plus.

Il y a bien entendu une raison à ce problème. Ce sont précisément les jeunes ménages urbains avec de jeunes enfants qui constituent, de par leur condition socio-économique, le groupe le plus vulnérable. Les ménagères avec de jeunes enfants sont particulièrement peu mobiles. Elles sont non seulement plus dépendantes du milieu, mais aussi moins en mesure d'en compenser les lacunes par la mobilité. En général, le revenu par tête n'est pas encore très élevé dans les jeunes ménages, surtout quand l'épouse n'est plus salariée ou ne peut travailler qu'à mi-temps après une naissance. Les gens ont rarement beaucoup d'économies à ce stade de leur vie; ils se sont le plus souvent endettés pour meubler le foyer.

C'est pourquoi très peu de jeunes ménages ont leur propre appartement. Le nombre des familles nombreuses ayant leur propre maison est sans aucun doute supérieur à la normale en République fédérale d'Allemagne, mais elles ne peuvent généralement se le permettre qu'à un moment où ce n'est plus vraiment nécessaire, tellement les enfants ont grandi. Quand un jeune ménage doit déménager à cause d'une affectation ou d'une naissance, il a d'énormes problèmes parce qu'un déménagement coûte cher et qu'il doit se rabattre sur des appartements nouvellement construits et chers.

b) Les effets de l'agencement du logement sur la vie familiale et la socialisation de l'enfant

Toute raffinée que soit sa définition, la variable "surpeuplement" reste un moyen très approximatif et insuffisant d'évaluer l'influence du cadre architectural sur la socialisation de l'enfant. On ne prête pas suffisamment attention au fait qu'un certain nombre de pièces peuvent être agencées de diverses manières, même si l'espace disponible est limité. Un agencement différent, par exemple, des pièces personnelles, communautaires et spéciales, des couloirs communiquants et des communications entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur limite assez différemment la façon dont les membres de la famille peuvent organiser leurs interactions. Le champ des diverses interactions possibles dépend en outre de la question de savoir si les moyens utilisés pour combiner ou séparer les pièces sont fixes ou changeables.

Il semble cependant que les architectes et les locataires soient plus au courant que les chercheurs de la façon dont on peut influencer la vie familiale par l'agencement du logement. Il n'y a pas eu, tout au moins à ma connaissance, d'études systématiques, empiriques, entreprises sur la corrélation entre l'agencement du logement et les interactions familiales. Même les études descriptives sur l'utilisation de certains agencements sont encore relativement rares. On n'a réalisé en fait qu'une foule d'enquêtes personnelles, peu instructives, pour savoir à quel point des locataires étaient satisfaits de leur appartement.

On retrouve cette lacune avec les études sur les conditions de vie de l'enfant. On oublie généralement que l'enfant utilise plus ou moins toutes les pièces, et pas seulement sa chambre. Les enfants ne constituent pas un groupe à part; pour eux, "vivre" ou "jouer" implique toujours une interaction avec le reste de la famille et les amis. Les architectes vont donc devoir se pencher sur la nature de ces interactions familiales.

Je vais tenter maintenant de dégager certains principes importants pour l'aménagement de l'espace de vie de l'enfant. Ils reposent sur une étude non empirique qui a cherché à définir des critères pour l'agencement du logement à partir de conclusions sociologiques (Baumann et Zinn, 1973). Il est ici symptomatique de la situation allemande qu'une journaliste, à la lumière de ses propres expériences et de beaucoup d'entretiens poussés avec des mères, soit parvenue à des conclusions et des critères très semblables, dans un ouvrage des plus remarquables et engagés (Dessai, 1976).

La relation avec la mère, qui est généralement le gardien, est un facteur déterminant dans la socialisation primaire des enfants au cours de leurs premières années. On peut dire qu'elle est fructueuse quand l'enfant se sent protégé et en sécurité, en tire un énorme enrichissement affectif, apprend à développer une personnalité et s'émancipe donc graduellement pour devenir indépendant, capable et apte à décider tout seul.

Ceci requiert au préalable certaines conditions. La plus importante me semble être la faculté pour l'enfant et son gardien de mettre entre eux la proximité et la distance dont ils ont besoin. "Proximité" et "distance" sont des notions clé en matière de socialisation spatiale; mais

elles sont des plus ambivalentes. Proximité avec la mère veut généralement dire chaleur, affection, aide et encouragement; cela peut conduire toutefois à une surveillance et un contrôle indus, constituant une entrave permanente pour l'enfant. "Distance", par contre, peut vouloir dire indépendance, intimité ou liberté d'action; mais l'enfant risque alors de se sentir soudainement isolé, impuissant ou désespéré. Et chez le gardien, la perte de tout contact auditif ou visuel peut créer un grand malaise. Dans ces conditions, proximité et distance ne profitent au mieux qu'à partir du moment où l'enfant et son gardien savent doser intimité ou réserve dans toutes leurs relations, de sorte que proximité ne signifie pas automatiquement interaction et distance le contraire.

Quiconque a vu des enfants jouer sait avec quelle facilité ils changent de jeu, d'endroit et de partenaire. Si l'espace favorise le changement d'endroit, il aide l'enfant à devenir graduellement autonome. Dans un cadre convenable, l'enfant commence très tôt (aux alentours d'un an) à quitter petit à petit les jupes de sa mère pour explorer le milieu. Les conditions spatiales sont idéales quand l'enfant peut délimiter lui-même l'indépendance qu'il souhaite.

c) Les lacunes du logement moderne

A la lumière de ces principes, les immeubles à logements multiples d'aujourd'hui laissent en particulier beaucoup à désirer. Ainsi, il y a rarement de terrain de jeux suffisamment grand pour que mère et enfant puissent rester proches et bien se voir et s'entendre sans être l'un sur l'autre. La cuisine est généralement orientée en direction du séjour; mais ce dernier n'est pas en endroit où peut jouer librement un jeune enfant, à cause de son mobilier coûteux et de sa vocation encore "mondaine". D'ailleurs, on rappelle constamment aux bambins qui s'y trouvent de faire attention, de ne pas faire de saleté ou de désordre, de ne pas laisser traîner leurs jouets et de les ranger quand ils sont dans le chemin des grandes personnes.

Dans les appartements modernes à louer, les pièces des enfants sont les plus petites et n'offrent d'habitude que très peu d'espace où jouer. Avec les familles nombreuses, elles deviennent des chambres collectives qui peuvent difficilement servir de lieu d'intimité et, encore moins, de salle de jeux communautaire pour plusieurs enfants.

Les pièces des enfants sont souvent isolées. Une pièce à part assure l'intimité nécessaire aux plus vieux et permet aux plus jeunes de se soustraire de temps à autre au contrôle parental; il n'en reste pas moins que la pièce séparée des enfants ne convient pas comme salle de jeux dans la journée pour les petits. La mère se trouve tellement à l'écart qu'il est impossible de communiquer pour un rien sans avoir à interrompre les travaux domestiques ou les jeux. Les jeunes enfants restent donc généralement dans la cuisine près de leur mère, qu'ils gênent. D'un autre côté, si la mère les fait rester dans leur chambre, ils tentent constamment et bruyamment d'attirer son attention; elle passe alors son temps entre la chambre et la cuisine ou bien elle les punit de sorte qu'ils se résignent à leur isolement. Cette situation est particulièrement navrante dans les

maisons groupées en ordre contigü, où la cuisine et le séjour ne sont pas au même niveau que les pièces des enfants, et où pour se rendre dans le jardin il faut passer par le séjour, la pièce taboue.

Dans les appartements d'aujourd'hui, la chambre des parents est rarement à l'abri du bruit des enfants. Des conflits deviennent inévitables quand un des parents veut dormir pendant la journée, comme cela se produit s'il travaille de nuit ou s'il est souffrant et a besoin de repos. D'autres lacunes tiennent aux communications entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur. La zone semi-privée de transition au-delà de la porte, très intéressante du point de vue expérience pour l'enfant, est souvent très difficile d'accès. L'enfant peut par exemple avoir à utiliser une cage d'escalier impersonnelle ou dangereuse, un ascenseur, ou bien avoir à affronter une rue très passante. De plus, il est souvent difficile de rester à portée de voix ou de vue du foyer. L'enfant ne peut par conséquent sortir qu'avec l'aide d'une grande personne. Une fois dehors, il se sent isolé, ou constamment surveillé s'il est accompagné par sa mère. Et quand il veut réintégrer l'appartement, il a de nouveau besoin de se faire aider. Voilà principalement pourquoi, à mon avis, les grands immeubles ne conviennent pas pour les jeunes ménages avec des enfants en bas âge (Zinn, 1975).

d) Impératifs en matière d'aménagement

Ceci m'amène à formuler les recommandations suivantes pour l'aménagement des appartements:

1. Dans l'intérêt des plus jeunes enfants, chaque logement devrait comporter une pièce à usages multiples rattachée à la cuisine, où la mère ferait le plus gros de son travail. Toute la famille pourrait l'utiliser comme une salle de séjour pour s'adonner à des jeux de société, des tâches ménagères et des travaux manuels sans gêner les autres, pour prendre les repas et pour converser. Elle offrirait notamment la possibilité aux plus jeunes enfants de jouer de la manière la plus variée et active possible tout en restant près de la mère. Dans les logements plus récents, on a parfois tenté de recréer l'ancienne cuisine-séjour avec un petit coin salle à manger. Il importe que ce coin reste distinct du salon, encore empreint d'une vocation "mondaine" liée à un souci de propreté.

2. La mentalité ouest-européenne fait du salon une pièce taboue pour les enfants. Il est généralement réservé aux parents, pour la quiétude et les réceptions. Il devrait donc être plus petit pour offrir plus d'espace au séjour familial, et situé de façon à ce que les invités puissent être facilement reçus dans l'intimité.

3. Les enfants devraient pouvoir s'isoler dans une pièce propre chaque fois qu'ils en éprouvent le besoin. Ce besoin varie cependant avec l'âge, de sorte que l'aménagement doit être souple. Les pièces individuelles des jeunes enfants doivent non seulement être suffisamment spacieuses pour qu'ils puissent y dormir, faire leurs devoirs et jouer seuls, mais aussi leur permettre de s'adonner à des jeux bruyants avec des frères, des soeurs ou des amis, à l'écart de la mère. Ceci signifie que dans les plus petits appartements il vaut mieux mettre deux jeunes enfants dans une

grande pièce (d'au moins 16 m^2) susceptible d'être séparée par la suite en deux, que dans des pièces distinctes, trop petites pour jouer.

4. Les pré-adolescents et les adolescents ont des besoins quelque peu différents de ceux des plus jeunes enfants. A l'extérieur du foyer, leur besoin d'appartenance à un groupe se trouve déjà en partie satisfait. Au sein du foyer, il leur faut une pièce (éventuellement petite par la force des choses) qui soit personnelle, indépendante, respectée comme telle par les parents et donc isolée si possible. L'idéal serait qu'elle ait une entrée indépendante. Cette différence de besoins entre les plus jeunes et plus âgés souligne l'utilité d'avoir des chambres d'enfants susceptibles d'être modifiées et séparées en deux au moyen de cloisons et de portes amovibles.

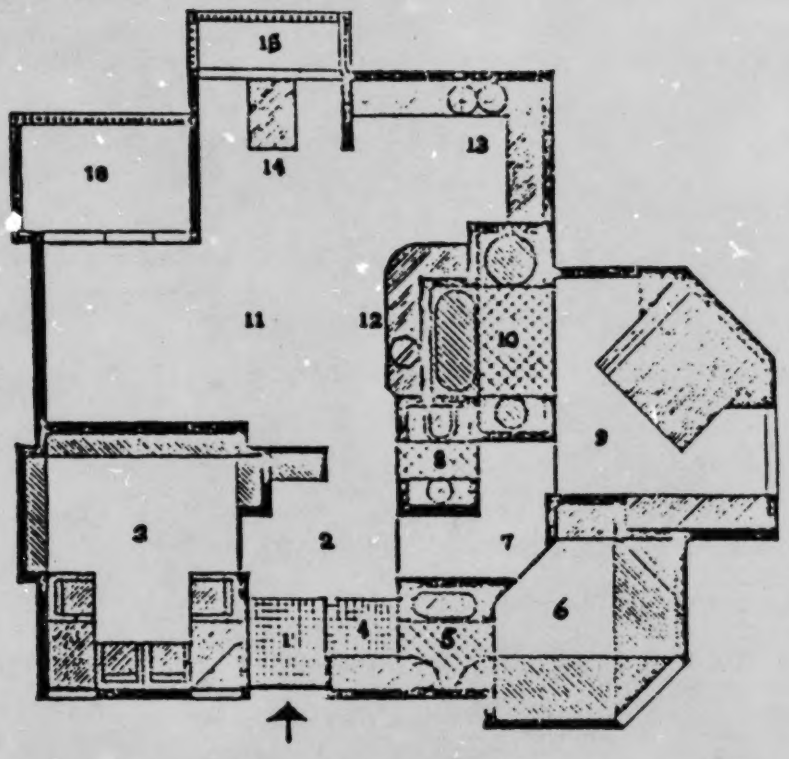
5. En règle générale, dans l'aménagement d'unités d'habitation, il ne faut pas associer strictement un certain type de famille à un certain type de logement. Ce serait aussi une erreur que d'associer automatiquement certaines utilisations, fonctions et idées d'ameublement à certaines pièces. Il faut au contraire concevoir les diverses pièces comme des pièces à "usages multiples" (des pièces interchangeables pour les grandes personnes et les enfants) afin que l'appartement offre la plus grande souplesse d'utilisation possible.

6. Aujourd'hui, au niveau de l'aménagement, on est notamment surtout appelé à améliorer l'insonorisation, tant au sein de l'appartement que d'un appartement à l'autre. On peut y arriver en partie par un agencement judicieux des passages communicants à l'intérieur de l'appartement, en partie par des améliorations techniques, notamment de l'insonorisation contre les bruits de pas. A cet égard, les petits immeubles à forte densité d'habitation sont préférables aux grands. Au niveau du domicile, les pièces individuelles, intimes, doivent être bien séparées des pièces communautaires, bruyantes, pour que les diverses activités (dormir, travailler et jouer) soient compatibles.

L'aménagement qui suit (d'après un plan de l'architecte allemand Ferdinand Tjaden) répond par exemple à tous les critères précités.

Toutes les idées que je viens de recommander pour l'aménagement de l'espace peuvent s'appliquer à peu de frais, puisqu'elles consistent simplement en une exploitation plus judicieuse de l'espace disponible. Elles peuvent donc profiter aux groupes à faible revenu.

Permettez-moi de souligner pour conclure qu'aucune n'est bien entendu vraiment nouvelle. Les bons architectes ont toujours pensé leurs plans de cette façon. Seulement, aujourd'hui, on a plus de mal que jamais à reconnaître la bonne architecture et le bon aménagement d'appartements. C'est pourquoi il est devenu impératif d'établir des critères sur une base scientifique - même si, en ma qualité de scientifique, j'ai souvent l'impression de surtout découvrir un savoir que les générations antérieures ont toujours possédé et utilisé intuitivement.



Plan d'aménagement possible, par Ferdinand Tjaden, de Dortmund

La superficie de l'appartement est de 95,35 m^2. Les enfants peuvent se rendre par une première entrée (1) dans leur vestiaire (4) et, de là, dans leur salle de bain (5) et leur chambre (6) qui communique avec celle des parents (9). Les parents peuvent se rendre directement de leur chambre dans leur salle de bain (10) et des toilettes séparées (8) aussi accessibles aux invités par l'entrée. En jouant (11), les enfants ne dérangent pas les parents qui se reposent durant la journée, mais sont visibles et audibles de la cuisine (13), du coin salle à manger (14) et du coin de la ménagère (12). Les invités peuvent se rendre dans le salon de réception (3) sans remarquer le désordre fait par les enfants.

Source: Dessai (1976)

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LE BESOIN D'ESPACE DE L'ENFANT: ASPECT SOCIAL DU PROBLEME

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Mon exposé a pour sujet le problème et l'impact du surpeuplement dans les foyers égyptiens. Dans les deux premières parties, je donne un bref aperçu de la vie en Egypte aujourd'hui, qui sert à introduire la troisième portant sur le surpeuplement. Et, dans un quatrième temps, j'indique comment on pourrait remanier la structure et le fonctionnement du gouvernement pour remédier à cette situation.

I. PROFIL SOCIO-ECONOMIQUE DE L'ENFANT JUSQU'A L'AGE DE DOUZE ANS

L'Egypte est un pays en développement victime d'une démographie galopante qui peut être considérée à la source de ses problèmes et a de profondes répercussions dans le domaine socio-économique.

D'après notre dernier recensement (de 1976), la population se chiffre actuellement à 38,2 millions d'habitants et s'accroît au rythme de 2,3% par an. L'essor atteint 2,76% en ville et 1,97% à la campagne. En supposant une expansion annuelle de 2,31%, le nombre d'habitants devrait atteindre 46,9 millions en 1985 et 66,2 millions en l'an 2000.

Du fait de cette rapide augmentation, le pourcentage des jeunes de 12 ans ou moins est très élevé: en 1978, il atteignait 31,6% (représentant 11,8 millions). Dans un même temps, les moins de 14 ans formaient 42,9% de la population, et les moins de 20 ans 51,2%.

Le fait que la population soit aussi jeune soulève des problèmes, non seulement directs mais aussi indirects, du point de vue démographique et socio-économique. Ainsi:

1. Plus le pourcentage d'enfants en âge scolaire est élevé, plus la part du revenu national à leur consacrer est importante.

   a) Vu les sommes à engloutir chaque année pour assurer le minimum d'éducation, il est difficile d'en améliorer comme il se doit le niveau.

   b) Il faut utiliser une part grandissante du revenu national pour répondre aux besoins croissants en matière de santé, de logement, de culture et de loisirs.

2. Le fort pourcentage d'enfants fait peser un lourd fardeau sur les adultes en âge de travailler, en entraînant une augmentation de la consommation, une réduction de l'épargne et une baisse du revenu par tête (128,1 livres égyptiennes en 1975).

3. Tôt ou tard, l'Egypte verra se poser le problème du chômage avec l'afflux de ces nouveaux bras sur le marché du travail, si le gouvernement ne tente rien dès à présent pour créer suffisamment d'emplois en prévision de la chose.

II. SERVICES OFFERTS A L'ENFANT

Apprécier les besoins de l'enfant exige d'évaluer les services qui lui sont offerts en Egypte et l'efficacité des organismes et des systèmes qui sont appelés à y répondre, de façon à identifier les lacunes. Dans cette optique, je m'efforcerai de donner un très bref aperçu des services offerts aux enfants de l'âge préscolaire et du primaire dans les secteurs suivants: santé, éducation, domaines social, récréatif et culturel.

a) Santé

Les maternités, hôpitaux pour enfants et infirmeries d'écoles offrent des services gratuits dans tout le pays, tant en ville qu'à la campagne. Grâce à cela, le taux de mortalité chez les enfants de moins de 12 ans a diminué (voir le tableau 1).

TABLEAU 1: TAUX DE MORTALITE INFANTILE
(PAR MILLIER D'ENFANTS VIVANTS A LA NAISSANCE)

	1954	1975
Enfants de moins d'un an	137.9	89.2
Enfants entre un et douze ans	66.2	48.3

b) Education

Le droit à l'éducation est un des besoins fondamentaux de l'enfant. Les enfants qui fréquentent l'école primaire (âgés de six à douze ans) sont, aux termes de la Loi, immédiatement visés par l'éducation obligatoire. Le nombre des classes et celui des élèves inscrits ont plus que doublé entre 1956-1957 et 1976-1977, du fait principalement de la rapide multiplication des scolarisables du primaire (voir le tableau 2).

TABLEAU 2: EDUCATION

	1956-57	1976-77
Classes pour enfants de moins de douze ans	48,476	101,635
Elèves de moins de douze ans	1.9 millions	4.2 millions

Bien que le gouvernement ait fait un énorme effort, le nombre d'élèves par professeur (36) et par classe (de 41 à 46) est élevé. Ceci tient à un manque de bâtiments scolaires et de professeurs qualifiés, et la qualité de l'éducation peut s'en ressentir.

c) Services sociaux, récréatifs et culturels (assurés par le ministère des Affaires sociales)

Ces services sont assurés à la fois pour remédier aux problèmes de certains et pour offrir davantage de possibilités à tous. Les foyers de placement familial et d'accueil s'occupent des enfants dans le besoin. Le nombre des garderies a augmenté (de 724 à 1273) en même temps que celui des enfants confiés (de 40 377 à 72 399) entre 1966-1967 et 1977. Les associations de réadaptation s'occupent des orphelins et des enfants dont les parents, malades, en prison ou séparés, ne peuvent prendre soin. La plupart de ces organismes emploient des professeurs, des animateurs d'ateliers, un ou plusieurs assistants sociaux, un médecin à mi-temps et, parfois, un psychologue aussi à mi-temps. Il existe des bureaux d'orientation familiale, mais ils ne sont qu'au nombre de douze en Egypte; ils emploient chacun un assistant social, un psychologue, et parfois un psychiatre. Leur rôle consiste à réconcilier les parents, à orienter les jeunes avant le mariage et à servir de médiateur entre parents et enfants.

Des activités sportives sont organisées par l'entremise du Conseil national de la jeunesse et des sports. Parmi les nombreuses activités offertes aux enfants de moins de 12 ans, on peut citer les entraînements sportifs (à raison de trois par semaine dans les écoles) et les camps d'été dans les localités de la côte. On trouve dans toute l'Egypte des cercles pour enfants, mis sur pied par le truchement de services culturels populaires. Ils offrent des jeux, des livres, des films, des pièces, des projets et des histoires pour enfants de moins de 12 ans; ils organisent des excursions, des fêtes et des expositions d'oeuvres enfantines. Au Caire, un centre culturel spécialement destiné aux enfants leur assure tout un ensemble de services culturels et les aide à développer leurs talents culturels. Il comprend un théâtre réservé aux enfants.

L'existence de ces services et de ces organismes ne veut pas dire qu'en Egypte les besoins de l'enfant sont satisfaits. C'est peut-être l'inverse. L'Egypte est un pays surpeuplé, où le niveau du revenu (et donc des biens et services) par tête d'habitant est très faible. Sous l'effet de la pauvreté et d'un analphabétisme important, la mortalité, la malnutrition et la maladie continuent à faire de gros ravages chez les jeunes enfants. Un pourcentage élevé de divorces vient encore compliquer la situation

pour certains. C'est surtout à cause des familles désunies s'il y a beaucoup d'enfants délaissés et de délinquents juvéniles. Et à tous ces problèmes il faut ajouter la forte proportion d'enfants qui travaillent, qui ne fréquentent pas régulièrement ou bien lâchent l'école (30% de ceux âgés de 6 à 12 ans). Dans ces conditions, les milliers d'écoles et les centaines d'organismes de santé et d'assistance sociale disséminés dans tout le pays sont encore trop peu nombreux pour les besoins de l'enfance; la qualité des services eux-mêmes laisse le plus souvent beaucoup à désirer.

III. BESOIN D'ESPACE DE L'ENFANT: UNE EXIGENCE FONDAMENTALE NON SATISFAITE

Dans toute l'Egypte, habitations et environs sont surpeuplés. Le logement sera l'objet de cette partie. En Egypte, l'enfant moyen passe d'un foyer surpeuplé à une école surpeuplée par un voisinage surpeuplé. Et comme l'encombrement de chacun de ces endroits aggrave le problème des autres, je dirai également un mot des conditions régnant dans les quartiers et les écoles.

L'Egypte souffre d'une grave crise du logement, due à la fois au rapide essor démographique (un enfant naît toutes les 25 secondes) et à l'exode rural vers les villes, notamment le Caire (on considère que la population est à 44% urbaine). Ceci se traduit par une forte densité démographique (23,737 personnes/km^2 au Caire, d'après le recensement de 1976), des logements non décents pour une bonne partie des habitants, un manque d'urbanisme, des services insuffisants, une pollution de l'eau et de l'air, et des conditions de vie généralement mauvaises et insalubres. Si on ajoute à cela l'importance des familles (en moyenne 5,2 personnes), aussi bien en ville qu'à la campagne, on peut imaginer les piètres conditions de logement que connaissent un bon nombre d'Egyptiens. Seulement 45,7% des familles ont de l'électricité (72% en ville et 18,6% à la campagne) et 30,1% de l'eau purifiée à l'intérieur du logement (30,2%) ou de l'immeuble (4,9%). Toutes ces carences, en plus du surpeuplement, compromettent gravement la socialisation des enfants et peuvent engendrer des frictions, des troubles affectifs et des problèmes de comportement.

Quand le logement est surpeuplé, il est difficile d'agencer l'espace intérieur et nécessaire d'utiliser chaque pièce à des fins multiples. On y dort, mange, cuisine, fait le lavage, met le linge à sécher et reçoit les visites; c'est également là que l'enfant étudie et passe son temps. Tout l'espace disponible, à l'exception des endroits pour dormir, est pleinement utilisé par les membres de la famille dans la vie de tous les jours. Dans les quartiers pauvres et les bas quartiers, le pas de porte et la rue forment un prolongement du foyer, où se tiennent bien des activités et des rapports sociaux. Dans ces conditions, l'enfant n'a aucune intimité à la maison; aucun endroit ne lui est réservé pour dormir ou étudier. Il dort et étudie où il peut, et pour jouer on l'envoie dans la rue.

Toutes les enquêtes effectuées en Egypte sur le logement dans les quartiers pauvres et les zones d'habitation non contrôlées ont démontré que la plupart des récriminations et des difficultés de la famille modestement logée proviennent, directement ou indirectement, du manque d'espace.

Le logement moyen, nouvellement construit, est devenu de plus en plus petit et, quand il y a pénurie, les gens prennent ce qu'ils trouvent. Depuis la Révolution nationale de 1952, le gouvernement égyptien s'est lancé dans la construction de logements publics pour les familles à faible revenu. Il a fixé les normes qui suivent.

1. Il s'agit de construire des logements publics dans les proportions suivantes:

   a) 28% de une-pièce, avec une superficie de 30 à 40 m^2

   b) 48% de deux-pièces, avec une superficie de 40 à 60 m^2

   c) 24% de trois-pièces, avec une superficie de 65 à 75 m^2

2. Chaque nouveau logement doit comporter un séjour, une salle de bain, une cuisine et un balcon.

3. Taille minimum pour chaque "pièce": 11 m^2

4. Pour la salle de bain: 2,20 m^2

5. Pour la cuisine: 2,80 m^2

6. Pour les fenêtres: 25% de la façade extérieure

7. Hauteur des portes: 2,40 m

8. Hauteur des plafonds: 2,70 m

9. Largeur des escaliers: au moins 1,20 m

Si l'on considère par exemple certains des logements publics construits à Hélouan (au sud du Caire), on constate que l'aménagement couvre une superficie de 12,6 hectares et est conçu pour une densité d'habitation de 400 personnes par feddom (ou 0,4 hectare). La surface se répartit comme suit:

Surface construite:	40%	4,2 m^2/personne
Services publics:	10%	0,8 m^2/personne
Rues:	30%	2,52 m^2/personne
Espaces libres:	20%	1,68 m^2/personne

Toute la surface aménagée donne 9 m^2/personne, ce qui est largement inférieur à n'importe quelle norme. Les enfants sont entassés dans les logements où ils n'ont pas moyen, par exemple, d'étudier, de faire leurs devoirs ou de jouer. Malgré un manque d'espace à l'intérieur et un sérieux problème de surpeuplement, les nouveaux logements sont devenus de plus en plus petits. Les enfants n'ont pas non plus suffisamment d'espace pour jouer dans le voisinage. Le problème des normes pour les espaces libres est une question sociale aussi importante du point de vue de l'urbanisme que la conception de l'habitation.

Les écoles primaires, qui plus est, sont tellement surpeuplées que le niveau de l'éducation est sérieusement compromis. Les rapports du ministère de l'Education révèlent ainsi qu'il y a plus de 60 élèves dans certaines classes du Caire. Les normes actuelles prévoient 2000 m^2 ou 0,4 hectare pour la construction d'écoles primaires. Dans une école à trois étages de 18 classes, les normes prévoient 1,2 m^2 par élève. Toutefois, bien des nouvelles salles de classe sont aménagées dans de vieilles écoles; à cause du nombre important d'élèves, les salles destinées aux activités parascolaires sont transformées en classes, ce qui étrique installations et activités. De toute évidence, des classes surchargées ou des bâtiments inadéquats peuvent compromettre tout effort déployé pour améliorer l'éducation en perfectionnant les programmes, l'enseignement et l'évaluation.

Le gouvernement a fait un effort dans ce sens. Le nouveau plan directeur de la ville d'Ismaïlia prévoit un hectare pour chaque école primaire, en partant du principe qu'en l'an 2000 il y aura 150 scolarisables du primaire pour 1000 habitants; chaque établissement visera une population de 4000 et accueillera 600 élèves du primaire, répartis en 18 classes de 33 enfants. Dans la même optique, le plan directeur de l'agglomération du Caire prévoit 0,8 hectare par millier d'habitants pour les services récréatifs; c'est sans compter les terrains de sports et les terrains de jeux scolaires.

IV. TYPES D'ORGANISATIONS NECESSAIRES

Je pense que le gouvernement est conscient de l'enjeu que représente l'avenir des enfants. Plusieurs organisations s'occupent déjà de leurs problèmes, à l'échelon national. A mes yeux, problèmes et besoins de l'enfant recoupent bien des domaines spécialisés différents (social, économique, politique, technique, esthétique, administratif); il faut donc une démarche intégrée pour y faire face, c'est-à-dire:

1. un travail d'équipe constant entre les diverses sphères de recherche intéressées;
2. une collaboration active entre chercheurs et décisionnaires;
3. de nouvelles solutions judicieuses.

Au niveau national, il est vital d'avoir:

1. un comité national chargé d'évaluer les besoins de l'enfant, composé d'urbanistes, d'architectes, d'économistes, de sociologues, de psychologues, d'avocats, d'administrateurs et de conseillers en démographie, et supervisé par le ministre de la Jeunesse (un membre du cabinet);
2. une équipe de recherche multidisciplinaire, permanente et efficace, rattachée à ce comité et collaborant étroitement avec lui, qui aurait un budget distinct pour pouvoir réaliser les enquêtes qui conviennent et fournir à l'organisme national toutes les données qui s'imposent.

Le comité national soumettrait au cabinet un plan quinquennal national portant sur l'évaluation des besoins de l'enfant, qui serait débattu à l'assemblée populaire et approuvé par ses membres (les représentants du peuple). Chaque province mettrait alors en oeuvre, par l'entremise de son conseil municipal, la politique générale approuvée par l'assemblée et aurait le loisir d'en adapter le détail à sa situation particulière.

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Plan directeur de l'agglomération du Caire.

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L'ENFANT ET LE MILIEU URBAIN: L'EXPERIENCE ISRAELIENNE

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Le thème de cet exposé relève de la psychologie environnementale. L'accent est ainsi mis sur l'interaction entre l'enfant et le milieu physique tel qu'il est aménagé et interprété d'après les conditions sociales. L'idée de base est que ce milieu physique joue un rôle important dans l'ensemble des expériences de l'enfant et, à ce titre, doit être conçu de façon à faciliter la satisfaction de ses besoins et à contribuer positivement à son développement.

Dans l'ensemble, l'enfant vit dans un cadre créé par des adultes soit à l'intention des autres adultes, soit d'après une conception d'adulte de ses besoins et préférences. Malheureusement, un tel cadre est souvent très mal adapté à l'enfant. Et les retombées sont plus profondes qu'il ne pourrait apparaître à première vue. On obtient avant tout une situation où divers besoins, même s'ils ne sont pas contrariés, sont plus difficiles à satisfaire dans le cas de l'enfant. La chose rejaillit en retour non seulement sur les grandes personnes les plus proches - les parents - mais aussi sur toutes celles qui partagent le milieu. Ainsi, si l'enfant habitant dans une zone résidentielle n'a pas suffisamment d'espace pour jouer, il va satisfaire son besoin de jouer dans les endroits où il peut. Les parents risquent d'être très mécontents de la chose parce que ces endroits sont dangereux ou bien jugés peu indiqués ou trop éloignés. Ces jugements contribuent à déterminer à quelle condition on laisse l'enfant jouer à ces endroits et, de manière plus générale, dans quelle mesure les parents sont satisfaits du cadre de vie. De plus, s'il joue dans ces endroits non indiqués, l'enfant risque de gêner les grandes personnes en faisant du bruit ou en se mettant dans leur chemin.

Mon idée est donc qu'en servant les intérêts de l'enfant, on sert ceux de l'adulte. Cependant, pour qu'il en aille ainsi, nous ne devons jamais perdre de vue les interactions et interdépendances entre les différents groupes de la population, et chercher à satisfaire les besoins de l'un sans peser les conséquences pour les autres.

Donner une plus grande priorité à l'enfant se justifiera et s'acceptera mieux comme démarche si l'on fait ressortir en même temps les avantages pour l'adulte, ainsi que les besoins et les intérêts que les deux ont en commun. Ainsi, la plupart des endroits où l'on circule à pied (notamment les escaliers) sont conçus pour l'adulte moyen. Ils posent des problèmes non seulement aux jeunes enfants, mais aussi aux handicappés, aux personnes âgées, aux adultes avec des poussettes ou des chariots à provisions,

aux cyclistes, aux livreurs, etc. De même qu'on ne saurait dissocier le milieu physique du cadre social, on ne peut considérer l'intérêt de l'enfant en négligeant complètement celui de l'adulte, et vice versa: l'interdépendance est trop étroite.

Avant de poursuivre, il faut faire un certain nombre de mises en garde. Naturellement, quand on parle de. enfants, on ne parle pas d'une entité monolithique, homogène. Leurs besoins et leurs intérêts dépendent étroitement de leur âge, de leur personnalité, de leur aptitude, de leur condition socio-économique et de leur milieu physique, culturel et social. Les interactions ne sont pas toujours faciles à définir, mais nous devons en être conscients.

Il est même difficile de définir clairement ce qu'est un enfant. La ligne de démarcation que constitue l'âge varie non seulement d'un pays à l'autre, mais aussi dans un même pays suivant les fins (par exemple, juridiques ou pédagogiques). L'âge est un facteur important parce que c'est moyen simple et pratique de différencier les niveaux de développement. Je me concentrerai ici avant tout sur les enfants ayant jusqu'à douze ans environ, même si certaines considérations valent pour des plus âgés. Cette restriction non seulement s'impose pour simplifier la tâche, mais aussi se justifie parce que les répercussions du milieu sont très différentes suivant que les enfants ont moins ou plus de douze ans, et paraissent plus importantes dans le premier cas.

En retour, nous voyons se poser le problème de l'identification des intérêts de l'enfant. Comment savons-nous en quoi ils consistent, et qui décide de leur importance? En tant que psychologue pour les problèmes de milieu, je pense que nous devons répondre à ces questions:

1. en étudiant le comportement de l'enfant, en discutant avec lui et donc en apprenant directement comment il appréhende la réalité et ce qui est important pour lui;[1]
2. en interrogeant les parents, les professeurs et les autres grandes personnes qui influencent - ou sont influencés par - le comportement de l'enfant;
3. en consultant les ouvrages spécialisés traitant du développement physique et psychologique de l'enfant.

Le problème, pas si simple, devient alors de dégager de cette connaissance des critères d'aménagement et de la mettre en pratique.

La situation en Israël

De même que la notion d'enfant est une notion très générale, l'idée de milieu urbain recouvre des entités physiques, sociales et culturelles très différentes, posant des problèmes très différents dans la vie

[1] Je vais exposer plus loin les conclusions de certaines études réalisées en Israël, dont cela a été précisément l'objet.

de l'enfant. Un de mes objectifs ici est d'essayer d'identifier les facteurs communs aux enfants urbains, qui transcendent les disparités politiques, sociales, culturelles, économiques et physiques. Et à cet égard, il faut saisir, tout au moins dans une certaine mesure, les conditions de vie de l'enfant en Israël car elles sont à la base de mon exposé.[2]

86% des habitants d'Israël (ou 3 007 300 personnes) vivent dans des localités urbaines.[3] (On entend par localité urbaine une localité comptant 10 000 habitants ou plus, ou bien une plus petite localité comptant au moins 2000 habitants et dont moins de la moitié des salariés travaillent dans l'agriculture.) La population est composée à 33% d'enfants de 13 ans ou moins, dont 83% vivent dans des localités urbaines.[4]

Au moins 75% de la population urbaine vit dans des habitations à étages multiples, d'une densité moyenne ou supérieure. En Israël, une faible densité brute de construction représente de 2 à 3 logements par dunam (ou de 8 à 12 par acre), une moyenne densité brute de 4 à 7 logements par dunam (ou de 16 à 28 par acre) et une forte densité brute de 8 à 10 logements par dunam (ou de 32 à 40 par acre). Il y a une différence de 40% entre les densités brute et nette car la Loi permet à l'Etat de prélever 40% du terrain sans dédommager le promoteur-constructeur. Cette portion sert à l'aménagement des services publiques (routes, eau et électricité, écoles, services sanitaires, parcs, terrains de jeux, etc.).

Le nombre moyen de personnes par famille urbaine est 3,6; le nombre moyen d'enfants de 17 ans ou moins par famille est 2,4.

Le nombre moyen de pièces par appartement[5] construit est passé, entre 1955 et 1977, de 2,0 à 3,2 dans le secteur public et de 2,2 à 3,6 dans le secteur privé. Durant la même période, la superficie moyenne par appartement est passé de 45 m^2 à 77 m^2 dans le secteur public et de 75 m^2 à 112 m^2 dans le secteur privé. Le poids relatif des secteurs public et privé dans le domaine du logement fluctue, mais il est resté à peu près égal pendant bien des années.

Il est manifeste que la qualité moyenne des logements disponibles s'est régulièrement améliorée; cependant, les disparités sociales existantes sont également une conséquence de la chose, car la qualité du logement a varié pour les diverses vagues d'immigrants, en fonction de ce qui était couramment offert à l'époque de leur arrivée (Oxman, Meyer-Brodnitz & Amit, 1978).

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[2] Je cherche ici à exposer les recherches et les pratiques israëliennes, souvent publiées uniquement en hébreu. Je ne me réfère donc pas aux travaux effectués dans d'autres pays.

[3] Cette statistique et les autres proviennent du Recueil statistique d'Israël pour 1978, publié par le Bureau central des statistiques.

[4] Comme la plupart des Arabes israëliens vivent dans des localités rurales ou de petites localités urbaines, l'exposé et le reste des statistiques vont porter essentiellement sur la population juive.

[5] En Israël, la cuisine ne compte pas comme une pièce.

La densité moyenne d'habitation est d'1,5 personne par pièce.[6] Néanmoins, en 1977, la densité a atteint plus de 3 personnes par pièce pour 2,9% des familles (ou 24 000 d'entre elles) et plus de deux personnes pour 4,6% (ou 38 000) d'entre elles. Un nombre important d'enfants vivent donc très à l'étroit. Le gouvernement s'est engagé à améliorer les conditions de logement des familles qui vivent à plus de trois par pièce; toutefois, le problème a manifestement des dimensions trop importantes pour pouvoir être réglé rapidement.

Le climat chaud, ensoleillé, qui dure de 8 à 9 mois de l'année, permet aux enfants de passer beaucoup de temps à l'extérieur. Ils ont une grande liberté de mouvement et une grande mobilité. Ils se déplacent couramment à pied et à bicyclette car les distances sont relativement courtes. Les transports publics sont bien organisés dans les principales localités urbaines et relativement bon marché, d'autant que les enfants de moins de 18 ans bénéficient d'une réduction de 50%.

Le milieu d'habitation

La vie de l'enfant tourne autour du foyer et de ses environs immédiats, cette dernière notion s'élargissant avec l'âge. Il importe de se rappeler que les conditions régnant au sein du foyer et de la famille influent substantiellement sur ce que l'enfant fait à l'extérieur. Les enfants qui vivent dans des foyers surpeuplés risquent de passer davantage de temps en plein air; or, une étude des services publics offerts dans les villes israëliennes en développement a fait ressortir une corrélation négative entre la densité d'habitation et les parcs et terrains de jeux: il y en a moins dans les zones à forte densité, alors qu'elles en ont probablement plus besoin (Hill & Alterman).

Rachel Sebba a, par exemple, demandé à 95 enfants (ayant de 6 à 16 ans) pourquoi notre société juge si important pour chacun d'avoir un foyer. 72% des enfants et des grandes personnes interrogés ont cité le fait d'"avoir le contrôle" comme une importante raison d'être du foyer. Néanmoins, alors que pour les parents cela représentait une fonction active, liée à la faculté de déterminer le caractère physique de l'espace ou d'y contrôler le comportement d'autres, pour une majorité d'enfants cela voulait dire être maître de son comportement; leurs attentes sur ce plan grandissaient avec l'âge. Les plus jeunes répondirent par exemple "on peut dire ce qu'on pense", "on peut demander à manger si on a faim", et les plus âgés "on peut manger chaque fois qu'on veut", "on peut mettre la musique a fort volume". Si ce minimum de contrôle est en partie ce qui distingue le foyer à leurs yeux, l'implication est qu'ils ont encore de contrôle sur leur comportement dans d'autres cadres.

La deuxième association d'idée la plus importante chez les enfants de moins de 13 ans était le sentiment de sécurité procuré par le foyer. Même si le fait d'être abrité de l'extérieur fut mentionné, l'idée principale qui se dégagea fut que dans le cadre familial du foyer, ils pouvaient évoluer à l'aise et en toute sécurité.

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[6] En Israël, la cuisine ne compte pas comme une pièce.

Les enfants soulignèrent également que le foyer était un bon endroit où grandir parce que les parents se souciaient beaucoup de leur bien-être; ils trouvaient que dans d'autres cadres comme l'école ou le centre communautaire, les adultes ne s'intéressaient pas à eux. Ces réactions méritent d'être notées car elles donnent un aperçu du monde de l'enfant et peuvent indirectement éclairer sur le problème de l'aménagement à une plus grande échelle dans l'intérêt des jeunes.

A bien des égards et surtout dans le jeune âge, le voisinage, c'est la ville de l'enfant. C'est là où il vit, va à l'école, joue, fait des courses et s'adonne à la plupart de ses activités. C'est le milieu extérieur où il se sent le plus à l'aise, parce que c'est le terrain le plus familier, qui lui donne la plus grande liberté de mouvement. Toutefois, même au sein du voisinage, l'espace qu'il utilise et auquel il s'identifie en fait est relativement défini, et restreint.

Galia Weiser s'est penchée sur la façon dont les enfants perçoivent leur rue (Weiser, 1977). Elle a interrogé des élèves de 4e et de 6e année, à qui elle a également demandé de faire un dessin de leur rue. Elle a découvert que l'enfant, tout en connaissant les limites normales de la rue où il habitait, n'identifiait "sa rue" qu'avec un seul tronçon. Dans 72% des cas (et à très peu de différence près entre les âges), "sa rue" représentait un tronçon de 150 m au maximum et, souvent, de 50 m seulement. Il semblait que certains facteurs, tels qu'un espace continu non troublé par la circulation et la proximité de centres d'activités attirants (par exemple, un gros centre d'achats) puissent contribuer dans une certaine mesure à porter le tronçon à 300 m.

"Sa rue" était un endroit pour vivre, pour jouer, pour bricoler, pour lire, etc. Par contre, pour le petit échantillon de parents, la rue se définissait par ses limites objectives, comme un tronçon reliant divers points, un endroit à traverser pour aller ailleurs.

Cette enquête vient corroborer d'autres études sur les quartiers d'habitation. Toutes aboutissent à la même conclusion. L'enfant joue à proximité de son domicile et le rayon de ce qui représente les environs, même s'il s'étend avec l'âge, n'atteint jamais beaucoup plus que quelques centaines de mètres. L'enfant joue près de son domicile, qu'il y ait ou non des endroits faits pour jouer, des risques à jouer, ou des dérangements de causés à d'autres personnes.

Dans la plupart de nos localités urbaines, le lieu d'activité le plus proche du foyer est la rue. Celle-ci a toujours été le principal endroit pour jouer des enfants urbains. Zacharie, le prophète biblique, dit même de la ville idéale que "les places de la ville seront remplies de petits garçons et de petites filles qui joueront sur les places" (chapitre 8, verset 5). Dans une précédente étude où j'ai passé en revue une bonne partie de la littérature disponible, j'ai approfondi la question du jeu dans la rue (Churchman, 1976). Il s'est avéré que l'enfant joue dans la rue parce qu'il y trouve certaines conditions souhaitables, notamment:

1. Un endroit, comme nous l'avons souligné, proche du foyer, qui offre l'avantage d'être pratique, de pouvoir être considéré dans une certaine mesure comme un prolongement du domicile, de donner un sentiment de sécurité, d'appartenance, et de permettre des groupements plus spontanés et provisoires. Les parents préfèrent aussi cette proximité car elle leur permet d'exercer une surveillance du foyer.

2. Un endroit invitant, parce que c'est un centre d'activités variées qui intéresse divers groupes d'âge, y compris les adultes. C'est là où est l'animation. Les enfants passent une bonne partie de leurs loisirs à regarder les autres. De toute évidence, il est plus intéressant de se trouver à un endroit où il y a des choses passionnantes à voir, où l'on peut épier les allées et venues des adultes et des enfants, comme les livreurs, les visiteurs et les voisins.

3. Un espace libre et une surface pavée où l'enfant peut s'adonner à ses passe-temps favoris (ballon, bicyclette, patin à roulettes, marelle, etc.).

4. Un espace libre parce qu'indéfini et non limité à des activités d'un type précis. Il se prête mieux aux activités purement dictées par l'imagination et l'envie de l'enfant. Celui-ci peut donner libre cours à sa créativité en utilisant pour jouer les objets qu'il trouve dans la rue.

5. Un endroit facilement et librement accessible, tant physiquement que visuellement. Toute spontanéité se trouve inhibée si se rendre dans un endroit convenable et autorisé exige un gros effort. Quand on dispose de la rue, on n'a pas à faire de plans à l'avance.

De toute évidence, il faut s'arranger pour aménager les rues des plus vieux quartiers urbains de telle sorte que les enfants puissent y jouer en toute sécurité. Aucun effort n'a encore été fait dans ce sens en Israël.

Quand la chaussée est beaucoup trop dangereuse, les enfants doivent se contenter de rester sur le trottoir et près du pas de porte. Dans certains cas, une cour d'entrée semi-ouverte qui donne sur la rue et a certaines de ses caractéristiques, a remplacé la voie publique, notamment pour les plus jeunes enfants. Elle répond le mieux à cet usage quand elle ne comporte pas d'appartements au même niveau, autorise suffisamment d'espace pour jouer et offre un accès physique et visuel à la rue (Churchman & Ginsberg, 1979).

Jouer dans la rue présente manifestement des dangers, que l'on s'est efforcé de prévenir dans des quartiers urbains plus récents en isolant véhicules et piétons. Toutefois, ce n'est pas une parfaite réussite. L'étude d'un de ces quartiers (Slijper & Stup, 1977) a montré que les enfants ne se servaient pas du tout des terrains de jeux prévus. Ils préféraient jouer dans les parcs de stationnement, près des poubelles et dans les passages piétonniers. Ceci engendrait des frictions avec les usagers adultes, et une impression de surpeuplement chez les habitants du quartier.

Que les terrains de jeux traditionnels sont pratiquement incapables d'attirer des enfants de plus de cinq ans est un fait établi et des études l'ont maintes fois confirmé dans le cas d'Israël (Amir & Alterman, 1979; Ginsberg & Churchman, 1978; Slijper & Stup, 1977; Weiser, 1977). Cela tient notamment au fait qu'ils n'offrent pas la plupart des attractions de la rue, et le genre de dimensions et de défis qui conviennent aux plus âgés. En offrant des installations statiques, déterminées, ils brident la créativité et l'imagination. Même les terrains de jeux plus récents qui utilisent des éléments plus naturels et se veulent plus originaux n'ont dans l'ensemble pas réussi à devenir autre chose que des endroits divertissants où l'on va quelques fois par an. De ce point de vue, il est évident que les grosses sommes qu'on y investit sont de l'argent jeté par les fenêtres.

L'importance de ce problème des espaces de jeux en plein air réside dans le rôle central que joue le jeu dans le développement physique, intellectuel, affectif et social de l'enfant. Disons très brièvement que le jeu est un moyen de faire de l'exercice, de tirer un plaisir sensoriel, d'éprouver et de développer ses aptitudes, de décharger ses émotions, de goûter à l'autonomie, de jouer à l'adulte au travers de l'expérience, de se former socialement (en apprenant à faire des concessions), d'apprendre à communiquer et à s'organiser, de donner libre cours à sa fantaisie, d'exprimer sa créativité, d'aller à l'aventure et d'explorer.

Rien que cette simple énumération montre que le jeu est une expérience essentielle dans le développement de l'enfant. Ce n'est pas une fonction marginale ou superflue, mais une manière d'apprentissage de la vie. De fait, le jeu conditionne le caractère, la personnalité et le savoir-faire de l'enfant et, au niveau de l'aménagement, il faut accorder à cette fonction fondamentale la place qu'elle mérite. Bien entendu, comme toute autre activité, le jeu s'insère dans un milieu; néanmoins, et il faut en tenir compte, c'est une activité toute personnelle, dont le cadre spatial découlera aussi d'un choix personnel.

Comme je l'ai déjà indiqué, le problème a des retombées importantes sur pratiquement tous les usagers du milieu d'habitation. C'est pourquoi l'aménagement d'un cadre propice au jeu doit recevoir une priorité plus importante que celle traditionnellement accordée à cette activité conçue comme "purement" récréative.

A l'heure actuelle, la tendance en Israël est d'aménager des terrains de jeux et de considérer que les besoins de l'enfant s'arrêtent là. L'emplacement de beaucoup de ces terrains donne fortement à penser qu'on a exploité l'espace subsistant après le gros de l'aménagement. On l'a fait malgré les indications déconseillant d'affecter au jeu des espaces précis et relativement importants, et d'investir de grosses sommes dans des installations statiques.

Dans une récente publication pour le compte d'un projet d'amélioration et d'innovation en matière de logement, organisé sous l'égide du ministère israëlien du Logement, j'ai souligné la nécessité d'adopter une démarche intégrée pour tout le quartier d'habitation (Churchman, 1978). Nous devons offrir tout un ensemble de possibilités de jeu afin de donner le choix

et de répondre aux besoins d'enfants différents, d'âges différents. Il est possible d'y parvenir parce que le critère est non pas le terrain mais l'espace de jeu, ou un espace pas uniquement destiné au jeu mais fait pour l'accommoder avec d'autres activités. L'enfant est le principal usager des espaces en plein air; il faudrait donc que tout le quartier d'habitation soit aménagé de façon à répondre à ses besoins psychologiques et de sécurité, et convienne au jeu.

1. Il devrait mettre l'enfant à l'abri des véhicules. Cela ne suppose pas automatiquement un isolement total, mais peut se faire en aménageant un réseau indiquant très clairement au conducteur que le piéton a priorité et qu'il est souvent un enfant pas encore capable de comprendre ou de respecter les règles de la circulation.

2. Les installations de jeu, et toutes les infrastructures (comme les murs de soutènement ou les palissades) susceptibles d'être utilisées pour jouer, devraient ne présenter aucun danger.

3. Les matériaux et surfaces devraient pouvoir résister aux jeux et "abus" des enfants. Cela vaut également pour les autres installations, comme les écoles et les centres communautaires, où évoluent de nombreux enfants. Les surfaces devraient être suffisamment variées pour les besoins des divers âges: terre, sable et eau pour les plus jeunes; surfaces pavées pour le ballon, la bicyclette et le patin; herbe pour se reposer ou faire des culbutes.

4. Les installations et l'espace devraient être adaptés à la taille, à l'aptitude et à la perspective des enfants. Des terrains de basket ou de foot réglementaires ne s'imposent pas pour l'usage courant. Une simple surface pavée de 15 à 20 m^2 avec un panier fera très bien l'affaire.

5. Il faudrait des espaces abrités du soleil, du vent et de la pluie.

6. Il faudrait empêcher de gêner d'autres résidents. L'intimité des logements du premier étage et le besoin de tranquillité dans les appartements ou certains coins au moins de l'espace en plein air devraient être respectés; en outre, les autres activités normalement exercées dans ces endroits en plein air ne devraient pas être dérangées. Nous avons vu que les enfants préfèrent jouer près de centres d'activités générales et il faudrait qu'ils puissent le faire sans gêner.

7. Les espaces de jeux devraient être suffisamment proches et visibles du foyer, comme nous l'avons souligné, pour que des enfants de 3 à 5 ans puissent jouer par eux-mêmes à l'extérieur.

Cette démarche intégrée pour l'aménagement du quartier aborde le problème à un micro-niveau, celui qui intéresse le plus l'enfant. Toutefois, elle pose un problème d'application à l'échelle macro de l'aménagement. Comment peut-on définir le nombre de mètres carrés ou de dunam à affecter au jeu? Le problème s'est posé récemment quand on a tenté de répondre à la question des besoins d'espaces libres par un nouveau système, plus souple, d'élaboration de normes foncières (Hill & Alterman, 1977). En se penchant

sur le problème des espaces de jeux, on a craint que si on recommandait cette formule et rejetait carrément le principe du terrain de jeux, il pourrait en résulter en pratique un amoindrissement considérable de l'espace libre offert et virtuellement aucune compensation pour l'enfant sous forme de petits espaces supplémentaires.

La solution adoptée a été un compromis entre le souhaitable et le faisable. On a fait une distinction entre les besoins des 0 à 5 ans et ceux des 6 à 12 ans. Pour le plus jeune groupe, il a été recommandé d'aménager ici et là des petits espaces, situés dans un rayon de 50 m et à portée de voix et de vue des logements. On a considéré une superficie de 200 à 500 m^2 comme suffisamment grande pour représenter un espace spécial et suffisamment petite pour pouvoir en aménager un certain nombre ici et là. De plus, on a fait des suggestions quant à la qualité de ces espaces et aux moyens légaux d'en faire assurer l'entretien par les autorités.

Pour les plus vieux, on est parti du principe qu'ils sont plus mobiles et auraient un plus grand choix d'espaces pour jouer; on allait donc prévoir un espace plus concentré pour un plus grand nombre en puissance. On a recommandé un espace d'une superficie de 1 à 2 dunam, suffisant pour certains jeux sportifs, qui serait situé dans un rayon de 200 à 400 m.

Un autre facteur qui rend malaisée une démarche différente est le fait manifeste que tous les parents ne réalisent pas que le terrain de jeux n'est pas la solution idéale pour l'enfant. Quand ils exigent des terrains pour preuve tangible que les besoins de leurs enfants sont satisfaits, ils consolident la politique officielle, et rendent les changements plus difficiles. Le fait est qu'il ne suffit pas de s'attaquer à un problème; il faut également que ce soit apparent. Il doit être évident aux yeux des adultes que l'on a pensé à leurs enfants et, qui plus est, obtenu des résultats tangibles. Une campagne de sensibilisation peut être nécessaire pour les en convaincre. Elle pourrait consister à les associer à l'aménagement afin de leur permettre de creuser la question et d'analyser les faits. Les enfants, quant à eux, n'auront pas besoin de démonstration; ils seront occupés à jouer.

Quelques mots s'imposent sur le chapitre controversé de la vie en grand immeuble pour l'enfant. L'expérience sur ce plan s'est avérée fort négative dans certains pays; cependant, on ne sait pas encore si le problème est inhérent aux grands immeubles, ou bien fonction de l'interaction avec d'autres facteurs comme la condition socio-économique, les attitudes culturelles, la taille ou l'architecture.

Nous nous sommes lancés dans une série de projets de recherches pour étudier la question au niveau israélien. Dans le cadre du premier, on a constaté que les femmes habitant deux sortes d'immeubles à 8 étages n'y voyaient pas de désavantage patent pour l'enfant. Pour la majorité d'entre elles, il y avait l'avantage de nombreux enfants parmi lesquels se faire des amis et ils étaient élevés de la même façon que dans de petits immeubles.

D'un autre côté, 31% des 150 personnes de l'échantillon trouvaient comme inconvénient au grand immeuble que l'enfant était moins indépendant. 77% d'entre elles laissaient leurs enfants jouer par eux-mêmes à

l'extérieur, mais la plupart ne leur permettaient pas d'emprunter seuls l'ascenseur (légalement, les enfants de moins de 14 ans doivent y être accompagnés, mais le sont rarement). En d'autres termes, certains inconvénients allaient de pair avec la hauteur du bâtiment, l'enfant devant utiliser la cage d'escaliers ou se faire accompagner (Ginsberg & Churchman, 1978; Churchman & Ginsberg, 1979).

Dans le cadre du projet suivant, nous faisons actuellement une enquête auprès d'habitants d'immeubles à 13 et 20 étages, en comparant avec des immeubles à 4 et 8 étages. D'après les premiers résultats portant sur 185 sondages, environ 50% des enfants sont autorisés à jouer seuls à l'extérieur, à l'âge de 4 et 5 ans; il y a une ligne de démarcation très nette puisqu'ils le sont tous dès l'âge de 6 ans. Il est toutefois intéressant de noter que malgré tout, pour bien des mères, l'enfant avait moins de liberté et d'indépendance que dans de plus petits immeubles.

Le début de conclusion à ce stade serait que, dans le cas d'Israël et de la moyenne bourgeoisie essentiellement étudiée, les grands immeubles ne sont pas la solution idéale pour l'enfant, sans être pour autant parfaitement mauvais.

L'aménagement du quartier: quelques recommandations

Tout bien considéré, je dirais que le grand problème n'est pas tant de prévoir des espaces ou des projets spéciaux pour l'enfant que de l'intégrer dans la vie urbaine en général. Que faut-il faire pour permettre à l'enfant d'y participer autant qu'il le veut?

Un impératif est de créer un milieu sûr, c'est-à-dire mettant l'enfant - ou lui permettant de se mettre - relativement à l'abri des risques de confrontation avec les véhicules, les adultes ou les enfants plus âgés. En Israël, la circulation est notre gros problème. Les rues dans les plus vieux quartiers urbains ne sont pas adaptées à la prolifération des voitures particulières (dont le nombre est passé de 80 500 en 1965 à 308 000 en 1977). Conducteurs et piétons sont, dans l'ensemble, beaucoup trop imprudents et le taux d'accidents est très élevé. En 1977, le taux de victimes a été de 436 pour 100 000 habitants, dont 16% d'enfants de 14 ans ou moins (Bureau central des statistiques, 1978).

Comme dans les autres pays, toute la circulation routière, y compris la signalisation et la vision, est conçue pour les adultes. Elle ne tient pas compte de l'handicap physique, intellectuel et psychologique de l'enfant, moins à même d'assimiler et de respecter les règles de sécurité, et se contrôler. Dans les écoles, on enseigne les règles de sécurité et des élèves sont chargés de régler la circulation à la rentrée et à la sortie des classes; néanmoins, il y a des bornes à ce que l'on peut attendre des enfants à diverses phases du développement. Le souci de leur sécurité devrait se traduire par un choix judicieux du site scolaire, du point de vue non seulement de la distance par rapport au foyer (actuellement de 2 à 3 km au maximum pour les premières années), mais aussi des rues à traverser.

A l'heure actuelle, il n'y en a que pour les automobilistes. On ne s'est en général pas encore fait à l'idée que les gens et la circulation piétonnière occupent une place centrale dans la vie urbaine et que leurs besoins doivent passer avant ceux du flot de véhicules. Les rues piétonnières ne commencent que maintenant à faire une timide apparition dans les plus grandes villes, même si les centres d'achats "piétonnisés" sont monnaie courante dans les plus petites localités urbaines.

Un deuxième impératif pour l'enfant est celui de l'accessibilité du milieu urbain. Cela suppose deux choses. Premièrement, un réseau de transport public qui permette aux enfants de se rendre par eux-mêmes aux endroits intéressants, sans devoir compter sur des adultes, ou aux adultes sans voiture d'y aller avec leurs enfants. Dans les principales villes israëliennes ce réseau existe, et les distances sont telles qu'il est possible par exemple pour les enfants plus âgés de se rendre par eux-mêmes d'Haïfa à Tel Aviv pour la journée. Deuxièmement, pour les endroits intéressants, un barême qui permettrait aux enfants peu fortunés d'en profiter. Sur ce plan, la situation en Israël est variable.

Un troisième impératif est celui de la "popularité", c'est-à-dire que le public connaisse l'existence des projets et des possibilités. Cela suppose souvent un effort de rayonnement, notamment pour toucher les couches qui ne sont généralement pas au courant des services offerts ailleurs que sur place.

Il faut également de la tolérance. L'enfant ne se comporte pas aussi bien que l'adulte. Il est souvent bruyant et turbulent d'une manière au fond inoffensive. A moins de comprendre et d'admettre la chose, on risque de lui interdire divers endroits.

Ainsi, une des bibliothèques municipales d'Haïfa s'est retrouvée envahie par des enfants bruyants des environs, venus faire leurs devoirs. La première réaction des bibliothécaires a été de les prier de partir parce qu'ils dérangeaient et que ce n'était pas un endroit pour le travail de classe; cependant, quand ils ont découvert que ces enfants venaient de foyers surpeuplés, où il n'y avait pas de place pour travailler, ils leur ont permis de rester et ont même commencé à les aider.

Mais tolérance ne veut pas dire laxisme. L'enfant doit apprendre que les intérêts sont mutuels, que ses droits présupposent le respect de ceux d'autrui. Néanmoins, le milieu urbain peut être mieux adapté à ses besoins.

Pour conclure, j'aimerais soulever un certain nombre d'autres questions et problèmes auxquels nous n'avons pas encore répondu ou cherchons toujours une réponse:

1. Est-il souhaitable d'isoler la circulation piétonnière de la circulation routière?
2. Comment le surpeuplement au niveau du logement peut-il s'évaluer? Quels problèmes pose-t-il pour le développement de l'enfant, et à partir de quel moment ceux-ci sont-ils critiques?

3. Les services et installations communautaires peuvent-ils remédier au problème du surpeuplement ou, de manière plus générale, des petits appartements?

4. Les installations communautaires peuvent-elles servir à des fins multiples et remplir convenablement les diverses fonctions? Ainsi, les écoles peuvent-elles également servir de centres communautaires?

5. Les nouveaux espaces devraient-ils être aménagés dans des zones à usage unique ou mixte?

6. Les quartiers aménagés devraient-ils être homogènes ou hétérogènes en termes socio-économiques ou évolutifs?

7. L'implantation de centres communautaires ou d'écoles à la limite de deux quartiers en permet-elle l'intégration?

La société ne cesse de vanter l'importance de l'enfant et la place centrale qu'il occupe en son sein. Cependant, les actes sont souvent plus éloquents que les beaux discours et, à cet égard, l'aménagement du milieu physique dément cette soi-disante importance. Toute solution au problème exige de peser en connaissance de cause les particularités et les besoins de l'enfant, et d'organiser l'aménagement en conséquence.

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AMENAGER LE CADRE D'HABITATION EN FONCTION DE SA VERITABLE UTILISATION PAR L'ENFANT ET L'ADULTE

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I. L'AMENAGEMENT D'AIRES DE JEUX ET DE LOISIRS EN PLEIN AIR DANS LE VOISINAGE IMMEDIAT DU FOYER

a) Introduction

Afin de remédier au fonctionnalisme extrême d'une bonne partie de l'urbanisme, on est en train d'arrêter aux Pays-Bas une démarche mieux intégrée pour l'organisation du logement et des loisirs. Toute la gamme d'installations récréatives est en train d'être incorporée dans les plans d'aménagement de nouveaux quartiers d'habitation.

Bien qu'il n'existe pas encore de fondement juridique solide pour les services récréatifs, la communauté reconnaît en général qu'ils sont nécessaires et importants. Par services récréatifs, on entend souvent toutes sortes d'installations sociales et culturelles, allant du simple banc au coin de la rue ou du bac de sable au grand centre communautaire.

Une condition essentielle pour avoir un milieu humain est de réglementer la circulation de façon à ce que piétons et véhicules puissent coexister. La qualité générale des quartiers d'habitation s'en trouve alors nettement améliorée, dans la mesure où l'on redonne aux résidents la jouissance de rues accaparées par la circulation. La rue retrouve ainsi sa fonction initiale, en redevenant un prolongement du foyer, un lieu de rencontre et de délassement. L'adoption officielle du "woonerf" comme principe de droit et d'urbanisme a beaucoup fait pour améliorer la situation. Nous reviendrons plus en détail sur cette notion.

b) Critères pour "l'humanisation" des quartiers d'habitation dans l'intérêt de l'enfance et de la jeunesse

A l'été 1974, la Stichting Ruimte a publié un rapport intitulé La jeunesse et le milieu d'habitation: Critères pour "l'humanisation" des quartiers d'habitation, qui énumère les besoins correspondant aux divers niveaux de développement (jusqu'à l'âge de 25 ans), d'après une étude approfondie de la littérature touchant les sciences sociales, la psychologie et l'éducation.

A cet égard, le tableau 1 récapitule les exigences liées aux caractéristiques des différents groupes d'âge. Les principaux points qui se dégagent sont les suivants:

TABLEAU 1

RECAPITULATION DES PRINCIPAUX ASPECTS DU DEVELOPPEMENT, DEPUIS LA NAISSANCE JUSQU'A L'AGE ADULTE, SOUS L'ANGLE DES BESOINS LIES AU PRINCIPAL CADRE DE VIE DE L'HOMME

BEBES
(0 à 1 an environ)

1. Dépendance, pour l'orientation, de l'attachement à la mère (symbole)
2. Découverte du corps et de ses fonctions
3. Développement des sens élémentaires (ouïe, vue et toucher)
4. Eventail limité de stimulants environnementaux
5. Maîtrise grandissante du corps (développement sensorimoteur)
   a) initialement: repose à un endroit fixé par l'adulte
   b) à partir de 7 mois environ: se traîne
   c) à partir d'un an environ: marche

TOUT PETITS
(1 à 3 ans environ)

1. Intérêt grandissant pour le milieu immédiat: la mère (symbole) encore centrale au début
2. Contact grandissant avec les membres de la famille, développement psychologique rapide
3. Développement du langage élémentaire
4. Début de la socialisation
   a) utilisation des toilettes
   b) comportement agressif et destructeur réprimé
   c) liberté d'expression et orientation de celle-ci
5. Maîtrise grandissante du corps et de la situation
6. Poursuite du développement moteur; la plupart des enfants marchent à l'âge de 15 mois
7. Développement et élargissement de l'expérience sensorielle
8. Perception plus sélective
   a) identification et interprétation des formes et objets
   b) capacité croissante de différencier les qualités visuelles et tactiles
9. Le rayon à portée de voix et de vue de la mère passe à environ 100 m
10. Désir d'expérimenter
11. Besoin d'une orientation rassurante
12. Jeu
    a) en compagnie de, mais pas avec d'autres enfants
    b) jeux de fonction et de mouvement
    c) jeux de fantaisie (avec des objets)
    d) jeux de rôle

TABLEAU 1 (suite)

PRESCOLAIRES (3 à 6 ans environ)	JEUNES SCOLAIRES (6 à 10 ans environ)
1. Les enfants du même âge deviennent importants	1. La mère moins centrale
2. Socialisation à une plus grande échelle (jardin d'enfants)	2. Les enfants du même âge sont très importants (jeux de groupe)
3. Choix de camarades	3. L'école primaire est le second cadre d'orientation avec un rôle important dans le développement et dans l'apprentissage social
4. Maîtrise grandissante du langage	4. Conscience sexuelle grandissante
5. Personnalité plus complexe du fait de l'imitation et de l'identification	5. Conception assez rigide de l'honnêteté et de la justice
6. Intérêt et curiosité grandissants pour les nouvelles choses	6. Indépendance grandissante (choix plus indépendant d'amis, de cercles)
7. Développement rapide de la perception	7. Davantage d'intérêt pour les animaux que pour les plantes
8. Développement moteur rapide	8. Jeu a) rayon d'environ 300 m; plus pour les fins spéciales comme l'école, le terrain de jeux, la piscine b) le sable, l'eau, l'argile et autres sont encore préférés c) jeux de construction d) jeux d'expression e) jeux de mouvement (course, escalade, saut, patin à roulettes, ballon) f) sports, tels que la nage
9. Les grands immeubles sont encore en général un obstacle	
10. Indépendance croissante; davantage d'initiative dans toutes sortes de situations; joue seul ou avec d'autres	
11. Soif d'apprendre et sensibilité à l'éducation	
12. Jeu a) rayon encore de 100 m environ du foyer b) jeux de mouvement (course, escalade, vélo, creusage) c) jeux de fantaisie, jeux de rôle d) jeux de construction (faire de nouvelles choses) e) jeux d'expression (préférence pour des moyens grossiers comme le sable, l'eau, l'argile, la pâte à modeler, le crayon, la craie	

TABLEAU 1 (suite)

SCOLAIRES PLUS AGES (de 10 à 13 ans environ)	JEUNES ADOLESCENTS (de 13 à 15 ans environ)
1. D'ordinaire, poursuite et accentuation des précédentes tendances	1. Passage de l'enfance à l'âge adulte (changements physiques et intellectuels plus prononcés) a) développement plus rapide de la taille et d'autres aspects physiques, apparence moins enfantine b) développement sexuel c) plus grande indépendance en général d) réflexion abstraite (questions d'identité, rebellion, idéalisme, insécurité, indécision)
2. Sentiment de puissance et rivalisation avec des enfants du même âge dans des batailles et des compétitions (sports)	2. Jeu a) musique, danse, passe-temps, jeux b) choix permanent, activités plus sérieuses
3. Indépendance dans la circulation à partir de 9 ans	3. Rayon illimité
4. En général, élargissement du cadre socio-géographique (rayon général beaucoup plus grand, rayon pour le jeu encore d'ordinaire 300 m du foyer)	4. Constitution de groupes informels au niveau de la rue ou du quartier
5. La différenciation sexuelle s'accroît a) les garçons jouent plus en plein air que les filles, d'une façon plus rude et d'habitude plus loin du foyer b) plus grande séparation sexuelle dans le jeu et les autres activités	5. Participation à des activités de jeunes ou de groupes
6. Jeu a) fantaisie b) jeux de construction c) jeux de groupe d) jeux de mouvement e) jeux	
7. Participation à des activités de jeunes et de groupes	

TABLEAU 1 (suite)

ADOLESCENTS PLUS AGES
(plus de 15 ans)

1. Besoin d'un "troisième environnement", en dehors du foyer et de l'école ou du travail, caractérisé par la "culture de jeunes"; vie de groupe particulière avec des normes et des valeurs propres et comportement extérieur typique
2. Rapprochement des sexes, activités mixtes
3. Les adolescents occupent une place spéciale dans la société et sont souvent particulièrement sensibles aux problèmes de la jeunesse et des adultes
4. Les différences sociales dans les deux univers d'expérience (travail et études) se précisent
   a) jeunes travaillants: plus grande indépendance en pratique
   b) étudiants: plus grande indépendance intellectuelle
5. Sports
6. Activités plus sérieuses (voir jeunes adolescents)

1. Les installations de jeux et de divertissement doivent faire partie intégrante du quartier. L'enfant doit pouvoir jouer dans tous les endroits de son milieu d'habitation, même si certains vont naturellement mieux convenir que d'autres et ces différences subsister.
2. Il importe de considérer tous les aspects du milieu d'habitation en fonction de leur utilisation par les jeunes et leurs aînés, ainsi que leurs fonctions principales et secondaires en toute saison, jour et nuit, aujourd'hui et demain.
3. Le milieu d'habitation (quartier, zone) devrait être considéré comme une unité intégrale, en constante évolution.

Le rapport propose deux normes quantitatives pour l'aménagement d'installations à l'intention de l'enfant au niveau du quartier:

a) L'enfant de moins de 6 ans joue d'ordinaire près de son domicile, dans un rayon de 100 m. A mesure qu'il grandit, son rayon d'action s'élargit progressivement.

b) Jusqu'à l'âge de 12 ans environ, le rayon est de 300 à 400 m.

Le rapport avance également un ensemble d'impératifs ou, comme nous préférons les appeler, de "références" à respecter au niveau de l'aménagement ou de l'évaluation des quartiers d'habitation. Voici en quoi consistent ces impératifs:

1. Sécurité

Pour qu'un quartier soit sûr, il faut assujettir la circulation à des dispositions spéciales donnant la priorité aux piétons et aux cyclistes. Un réseau de voies et de pistes pour piétons et cyclistes constitue le principal moyen de communication entre maisons d'une part, et maisons, écoles et installations récréatives ou autres d'autre part.

a) Sécurité routière

Le terrain de jeux n'est qu'un palliatif, une solution bien intentionnée à un problème essentiellement faux. C'est une forme d'appauvrissement car l'enfant devrait se sentir en mesure d'explorer en toute sécurité son milieu. Il lui faut des parcs, des jardins, etc., où il puisse aller, où il aime aller, des endroits qui se prêtent au jeu. Il lui faut aussi pouvoir faire en toute sécurité le trajet à ou de l'école, en trouvant sur son chemin des possibilités de jeu stimulants.

b) Sécurité de zones d'eau

Il faudrait faire particulièrement attention aux zones d'eau. Les berges ne doivent pas être trop escarpées, car l'enfant qui tombe à l'eau doit pouvoir s'en sortir. La chose est possible si l'eau est peu profonde au bord. Une berge aux aspects très variés, avec des anses et asséchée, couverte de roseaux et boueuse par endroits, invite au jeu sans risque d'accidents fatals. Tout bâtiment devrait être à une certaine distance de l'eau. Les endroits de jeu sûrs, où l'eau coule doucement et n'a pas plus de 20 cm de profondeur, devraient être situés là où les gens en promenade vont passer ou pouvoir se reposer sur un banc. Ces endroits sûrs devraient être facilement identifiables. En aucun cas de jeunes enfants ne devraient être autorisés à jouer près de l'eau sans surveillance; de plus, il faudrait absolument interdire l'accès des zones d'eau vraiment dangereuses, en plantant par exemple une haie impénétrable.

2. Adaptation aux besoins

Dans un climat comme le nôtre, il est très important d'être à l'abri des éléments. Il vente et pleut souvent. Les grands immeubles créent des rafales de vent et les nouvelles surfaces bâties comprennent souvent des terrains exposés, où il ne fait pas bon s'attarder.

Les aires abritées accroissent les possibilités d'activités: s'il pleut, vente ou fait trop froid, l'enfant doit pouvoir jouer à l'intérieur. Cela est particulièrement important, dans les zones à grands immeubles.

L'intimité est essentielle pour les jeunes enfants. Comme ils sont moins en mesure de se faire aux conditions, ils ont besoin de points de repère à proximité du foyer. Ceux de moins de six ans doivent pouvoir jouer dans un rayon de 100 m, c'est-à-dire à portée de voix; et il leur faut des installations à leur échelle, notamment des petits bacs de sable, des mares peu profondes, des murs bas et peu d'élévations.

Comme l'abri, cela a à voir avec le sentiment de protection, mais dans un sens affectif plutôt que physique. Cela veut dire se sentir à l'aise et en sécurité dans un milieu familier, avoir l'endroit qui convient pour s'asseoir, s'étendre, s'isoler, rencontrer des gens, prendre le temps de bavarder.

Les environs immédiats du foyer sont importants pour tout le monde: ils font véritablement partie du foyer. C'est là que jouent les plus jeunes enfants. Il faut donc les aménager avec le plus grand soin.

Comme les grands immeubles manquent généralement d'intimité, il faut accorder une attention particulière à l'entrée et aux environs immédiats. A l'échelle de l'enfant, qui voit tout d'une petite hauteur, l'escalier peut être un obstacle insurmontable, la bordure de trottoir un gradin, l'auto un monstre.

3. Tolérance

L'urbanisme et l'aménagement architectural doivent tenir pleinement compte des activités des enfants et des adultes. Le milieu d'habitation doit encourager le jeu chez l'enfant; il faut minimiser au maximum les empêchements.

Faire preuve de tolérance signifie donner à l'enfant la chance d'être un enfant, de s'organiser un monde de jeu dans le monde réel; cela signifie ne pas dresser une ligne de démarcation trop brutale entre ces deux univers, et déterminer à l'avance comment l'enfant va réagir au milieu où il vit.

Certains moyens peuvent consister à:

a) rendre les fils barbelés inutiles;
b) ne pas avoir de plantes fragiles;
c) faire pousser des plantes sur les sols nus;
d) couper les coins des plates-bandes, en les intégrant au chemin, ou planter des arbustes de bonne taille aux coins;
e) aménager des chemins et des itinéraires d'évitement logiques, et indiquer clairement où ils se trouvent.

4. Accessibilité

L'enfant qui ne peut pas jouer est frustré, tandis que celui que l'on prend toujours par la main ne s'émancipe pas. C'est pourquoi les tout jeunes et les jeunes enfants devraient pouvoir sortir par eux-mêmes, jouer par eux-mêmes et réintégrer le foyer par eux-mêmes; cela n'est

possible que s'il existe une communication directe et facile entre le foyer et l'extérieur, et entre l'extérieur et l'école ou le club.

Dans les grands immeubles, il y a trop d'obstacles au jeu en plein air. Les jeunes enfants ne peuvent pas utiliser l'ascenseur ou l'escalier sans aide. Corridors, cages d'escaliers et entrées sont souvent pleins de courants d'air, de sorte que l'enfant a tendance à rester à l'intérieur; et il n'a pas non plus le droit de jouer à ces endroits à cause du bruit. C'est ainsi que tout l'espace compris entre le domicile et l'extérieur ne peut pas servir au jeu.

Une communication directe entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur est importante dans la mesure où l'enfant peut facilement rayonner à partir du foyer, de sorte que les grands immeubles ne sont pas recommandés pour les petits s'ils ne sont pas équipés d'ascenseurs, de sonnettes et d'interphones aisément accessibles. Les bâtiments ne comportant pas plus de trois étages offrent les possibilités de jeu spontané qui sont si importantes pour le développement de l'enfant.

5. Variété et gaieté

Si l'on varie l'aménagement, l'agencement et les matériaux utilisés, le milieu d'habitation devient plus surprenant et fascinant, plus stimulant et souvent intriguant, et aussi plus identifiable.

L'enfant aime les élévations: il peut grimper, se laisser glisser, se cacher, sauter ou s'asseoir à l'abri d'une pente. Il peut faire des découvertes et se mesurer au milieu. Les élévations s'accompagnent d'une température et d'une humidité différentes, ce qui permet une végétation plus variée. Par temps de pluie, de petits ruisseaux se forment et des mares provisoires apparaissent dans les creux. En hiver, on peut faire de la luge sur les pentes enneigées.

Chose peut-être tout aussi importante, il devrait y avoir différentes fonctions et activités pour l'endroit. L'utilisation d'un lieu à des fins multiples est en fait ce qui caractérise une rue animée. Cela peut se faire en intégrant au niveau de l'aménagement les habitations, les ateliers, les magasins, les bureaux et les installations récréatives ou autres.

6. Communications et voies de circulation

Considérez un plan ou un quartier de la façon dont le ferait un usager; mettez-vous en particulier à la place du piéton et vérifiez, par exemple, si les conditions répondent aux critères mentionnés. Les voies de communication entre les divers services et installations sont-elles directes et suffisamment courtes? Coupent-elles des voies routières sans présenter de dangers? Y a-t-il suffisamment d'abris? L'aménagement est-il gai et attirant dans sa variété?

7. Installations de jeux

Sont-elles intégrées comme de véritables endroits de rencontre dans le plan ou le quartier? L'aménagement de chaque aire de jeux a-t-il répondu aux critères susmentionnés? De même qu'il doit y avoir de petits coins intimes, il doit y avoir dans chaque installation de jeux des espaces libres en partie reliés aux petits endroits, et en partie distincts d'eux. Les enfants d'âges différents ont besoin de temps en temps de voisiner, mais peuvent également se gêner.

8. Participation

Le bon fonctionnement des installations exige la participation des organismes locaux officiellement chargés de l'entretien, ou bien des résidents eux-mêmes éventuellement appuyés par ceux-ci. Il va sans dire qu'une telle liste de normes ne saurait être exhaustive car la qualité du milieu est une notion qui ne peut jamais être épuisée.

II. LA MISE AU POINT D'UN OUTIL POUR EVALUER LE MILIEU D'HABITATION: LE PROJET DE RECHERCHE ROERMOND

A Roermond, nous nous occupons d'une des principales façons dont peut être utilisé le milieu d'habitation: pour les jeux et les loisirs. Conformément aux directives ci-dessus, on peut dégager trois nouvelles idées importantes en ce qui concerne cet aspect du milieu d'habitation:

1. Les enfants et les autres résidents doivent pouvoir utiliser pour les jeux et les loisirs tout le milieu d'habitation et pas seulement des installations expressément prévues à cet effet;
2. Bien que la démarche statistique joue un rôle important, la qualité importe plus que la quantité;
3. Les installations de jeux devraient être conçues et aménagées comme une partie intégrante du plan d'urbanisme.

De plus en plus de municipalités adoptent ces nouvelles idées, souvent simplement de manière intuitive. Néanmoins, des problèmes peuvent se poser lorsqu'il s'agit de les concrétiser par des mesures.

La municipalité de Roermond, confrontée au besoin de rénover un nombre extrêmement important de rues et de quartiers, a demandé conseil à la Stichting Ruimte au printemps 1976. Il lui fallait décider des améliorations à apporter. La municipalité a demandé à la Stichting Ruimte d'essayer de transposer dans la pratique les idées sur le milieu d'habitation qu'elle formulait dans son rapport et dont traite la première partie de cet exposé. Elle a proposé que la nouvelle politique soit relativement progressiste, et conforme aux trois critères susmentionnés. La Stichting a accepté l'invitation et recommandé alors le programme en trois étapes qui suit:

1. Evaluation des quartiers existants à la lumière des directives avancées dans le rapport pour humaniser le milieu d'habitation;

2. Etude de la possibilité de les convertir en zones résidentielles à circulation restreinte;

3. Aménagement d'installations de jeux officielles.

Un projet de recherche a été mené à bien en collaboration avec un groupe de représentants gouvernementaux locaux et en concertation avec divers groupements participant aux affaires municipales. Dans un premier temps, l'effort a principalement porté sur le premier aspect.

a) Modalités de la recherche

L'évaluation de tous les cadres d'habitation a consisté principalement en une observation systématique à la lumière de la série d'exigences déjà exposée. Les observations ont porté sur le milieu tel que le percevait le chercheur et sur tout ce qu'il s'y passait ou non lors d'une, de deux ou de trois visites sur place. Cette démarche met particulièrement l'accent sur les qualités physiques et spatiales du milieu, et part de l'hypothèse qu'il y a une corrélation déterminée entre les particularités physiques d'un milieu et les qualités qui en font un cadre de vie attirant.

Pour les besoins de la cause, les particularités physiques ont été classées de façon systématique et dénommées "critères" (la liste obtenue n'était pas toujours exhaustive). L'observation systématique du milieu d'habitation a alors consisté en une analyse de particularités à la lumière des critères, qui a fourni un même temps une description. Cela a fait ressortir certains problèmes clé, ainsi que des améliorations possibles. La plupart des données ont consisté en descriptions verbales, bien que des dessins explicatifs aient été parfois inclus. Par souci d'objectivité, toutes les évaluations ont été les plus explicites possible. De cette façon, les personnes les plus directement intéressées (les résidents eux-mêmes) ont pu savoir comment elles avaient été réalisées.

Une considération importante dans ce genre de projet de recherche est de pouvoir aborder tous les aspects avec tous les intéressés. A cet égard, les évaluations n'ont rien de final; elles représentent plutôt un travail préliminaire, ou l'amorce de toute une série d'études comparables susceptibles de déclencher un certain nombre de processus, tant au niveau des quartiers que des mairies, et de déboucher en temps voulu sur une action précise.

A tous les stades du projet, on a éprouvé le besoin d'obtenir des renseignements en sus de ceux immédiatement vérifiables. Un certain nombre de spécialistes et de représentants gouvernementaux locaux ont donc été consultés. En outre, des entretiens inopinés ont permis de glaner des renseignements sur diverses zones, voies de communication, liaisons, et l'emplacement de certaines installations. Le projet, cependant, a eu pour principal objectif l'évaluation du milieu, à la lumière des huit directives et avec un accent particulier sur les aspects physiques. L'outil de recherche que nous avons mis au point et dénommé "système d'évaluation des

possibilités de jeux dans les milieux d'habitation" développe chacune des huit directives et permet de recueillir, en relation avec chaque, des renseignements précis et détaillés sur un quartier donné. Le tableau 2 donne un aperçu du système.

b) Utilité de la démarche

La méthode utilisée s'est concentrée sur la qualité et s'est peu soucié de normes statistiques. Elle a consisté à analyser le milieu à la lumière des huit critères déjà mentionnés. Cela signifie que l'analyse a dû être approfondie, expérimentale et susceptible de dégager des conclusions sûres. Dans ce genre de projet, l'équipe de recherche et le client doivent avoir certains principes de base en commun pour que les résultats soient significatifs. Cette démarche contraste avec celle où l'on recueille des données d'ordre quantitatif, comme sur le nombre de mètres carrés d'installations données en relation avec des normes statistiques.

A Roermond, la municipalité et la Stichting Ruimte étaient d'accord sur le fondement de la méthode qualitative, et les autorités ont adopté le rapport soumis. Il contient une description détaillée de chaque cadre d'habitation par les jeunes résidents et donne une idée générale de la situation, notamment des lacunes et des changements qui s'imposent. De plus, comme les habitants des quartiers en cause ont eu leur mot à dire, le dossier peut servir à définir un train de mesures prioritaires. Un certain nombre de questions essentielles ont été soulevées:

1. La méthode d'analyse retenue, qui demande de l'expérience et doit être fiable, est-elle utilisable par le truchement d'un nombre restreint d'observateurs, sans que la seule importance de la communauté visée (comme toute une municipalité) pose des problèmes insurmontables?

2. Peut-on évaluer de cette façon n'importe quel genre de milieu d'habitation? L'expérience a ainsi démontré que des problèmes se posent avec tous les quartiers composés de grosses maisons individuelles, où les espaces libres consistent principalement en routes. Dans ce cas, on ne peut rien attendre de la méthode car les principes régissant ce genre d'aménagement vont radicalement à l'encontre de ceux utilisés dans notre évaluation.

3. Dans quelle mesure est-il judicieux d'axer l'évaluation principalement sur des facteurs physiques? Conviendrait-il d'inclure également des aspects liés à l'utilisation et l'expérience?

4. Serait-il bon que les chercheurs de l'extérieur travaillent en collaboration avec des gens du coin, pour des raisons à la fois de principe et d'ordre pratique? Une collaboration suivie de ce genre permettrait de baser l'évaluation sur l'avis d'experts locaux.

TABLEAU 2

RELATIONS

1. Sentiers pour piétons, pistes cyclables

   a) déviations imposées par suite de l'aménagement de parcs, jardins et sentiers

   b) options: protégés/libres
      séparés/combinés avec la circulation

2. Emplacement des terrains de jeux, possibilités de s'asseoir le long des parcours piétonniers

   a) relations précises oui/non

   b) corrélations oui/non

   c) valeur en tant que point de rencontre (jeunes et vieux)

3. Par le biais des voies routières; emplacement des services dans les quartiers (magasins, écoles, centres médicaux, organismes sociaux, centres communautaires, etc.)

   a) concentrés/disséminés (quartier, zone)

   b) sûrs et faciles d'accès oui/non
      obstacles comme des routes fréquentées

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5. Pouvons-nous rendre nos critères plus objectifs? Une des questions les plus cruciales est de savoir si, dans ce genre de recherche, les données peuvent pleinement s'exprimer par des mots.

La mise au point de cette méthode qualitative et le fait que l'on en ait de plus en plus besoin peuvent s'interpréter comme le signe d'un changement positif dans la façon de concevoir le milieu d'habitation. A la longue, il se peut que la connaissance et la compréhension fassent tellement de progrès qu'un bon nombre de nos difficultés actuelles finissent par disparaître d'elles-mêmes.

III. LE "WOONERF"[1]

On peut dire que le processus d'une réévaluation radicale du milieu d'habitation aux Pays-Bas s'est amorcé dans les années soixante;

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[1] Voir également "Woonerf: Residential Precinct", Royal Dutch Touring Club, Ekistics V. 45 # 273, nov./déc. 1978, "People-Oriented Urban Streets", p. 417 à 423.

toutefois, ce n'est que récemment, au cours des années soixante-dix, qu'il a commencé à retenir l'attention des décisionnaires. Le premier organisme à prendre des mesures précises pour restituer à la rue sa fonction initiale a été la municipalité de Delft en 1971.

Pendant trop longtemps, on a donné la priorité à la circulation fluide des véhicules. Ils accaparent l'espace requis pour marcher, s'asseoir, contempler, jouer et rencontrer des amis; ils polluent de plus en plus, par les émissions et par le bruit, et constituent un danger pour l'enfant. L'idée du "woonerf" - une rue ou un réseau de rues qui donne la priorité aux piétons - a été sanctionnée par le ministère des Transports et des Travaux publics en septembre 1976. Elle marque un pas important dans la voie de la préservation de la qualité du milieu d'habitation.

Il est devenu clair que l'urbanisme peut faire beaucoup pour atténuer les conflits entre piétons et véhicules.[2] La recherche (Kraay, 1974; Swov, 1976) a démontré que les mesures visant à influencer le comportement social - notamment les règlements, les moyens techniques comme les passages protégés, l'enseignement de la sécurité routière aux enfants et les campagnes de publicité - ne produisent pas les effets voulus sur le plan sécurité. Selon le groupement SCAFT en Suède (SCAFT, 1968), les "erreurs" des piétons occupent une place secondaire dans le problème de la sécurité piétonnière. Le principal danger vient de la circulation qui crée des conditions où il y a un certain risque d'"erreurs". Les conditions devraient être telles que l'"erreur" d'un piéton ne conduise pas rapidement à une confrontation ou un accident.

La solution la plus évidente est la ségrégation des piétons et des véhicules, c'est-à-dire un aménagement du milieu tel que les confrontations entre les deux soient pratiquement impossibles. Aucune réglementation ne s'impose; c'est un système clair, compréhensible, conditionné par sa conception.

Une autre application de ce principe est l'aménagement de réseaux de voies piétonnières et cyclables. Dans la plupart des cas, elles peuvent être parallèles aux voies routières, mais lorsqu'elles traversent des routes très fréquentées, des arrangements spéciaux sont prévus. L'étude d'un réseau de voies piétonnières et cyclables pour Delft (100 000 habitants) révèle que le coût se monte à environ 10% du coût normal de l'aménagement pour les automobiles.

Ces voies piétonnières et cyclables contribuent dans une large mesure à la sécurité et l'agrément des trajets entre le domicile et l'école. La ségrégation des piétons et des véhicules, cependant, restreint beaucoup trop les activités et rapports en tous genres auxquels sert normalement le quartier immédiat. Ceci amène à aborder le problème de la sécurité routière dans les quartiers d'habitation d'une manière nouvelle, axée sur l'intégration.

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[2] Cette partie s'inspire de l'introduction du rapport intitulé "Development of a Conflict Observation Technique", par V.A. Güttinger et J.H. Kraay, Pays-Bas, 1976.

Le woonerf assure un genre d'intégration. En son sein, les espaces publics servent principalement d'endroits pour marcher et jouer; seuls les véhicules locaux sont autorisés. Au lieu d'apporter des changements marginaux, comme ajouter des pas de porte et rétrécir des routes, créer un woonerf nécessite une démarche systématique, où tout le quartier est aménagé ou réaménagé.

La fonction du woonerf diffère notamment de celle d'une rue traditionnelle par le fait que la même surface pavée peut servir, et sert, à des activités comme conduire, jouer, faire du vélo, marcher et se stationner.

Le woonerf n'est pas, loin s'en faut, la seule façon d'"humaniser" une rue; une autre solution moins radicale peut être souhaitable, surtout si la rue ne joue pas un rôle important comme voie de transit.

Si la circulation est très dense (plus de 150 véhicules aux heures de pointe) et le stationnement excessif par rapport à la densité d'habitations, le woonerf ne sera pas la solution. Dans ce cas, il faut en trouver une autre.

Quoi qu'il en soit, il faut se garder d'adopter une démarche figée pour l'aménagement de rues et de places simplement parce que la Loi fixe certaines exigences et conditions minimales à remplir par un woonerf. Il est essentiel que le but de tous ces efforts et, donc, le motif de mesures précises restent clairs. Chaque nouvelle rue (ou quartier) possède ses particularités qui permettent de trouver de nouveaux moyens de la (ou le) rendre plus sûr(e) et mieux adapté(e) aux besoins. De cette façon, chaque quartier individuel aura un cachet propre et tout le milieu urbain y gagnera.

IV. QUELQUES PROJETS DE RECHERCHE SUR LES EFFETS D'AUTRES SOLUTIONS D'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN EN CE QUI CONCERNE PARTICULIEREMENT LES QUARTIERS D'HABITATION[3]

a) Utilisation faite de l'environnement quotidien

Dans la première moitié de 1974, un projet de recherche s'est achevé avec la publication du rapport, "Evaluation de l'utilisation de l'environnement quotidien: étude comparative de deux zones d'habitation nouvellement construites à Delft", par V.A. Güttinger. Ce rapport renferme les résultats d'une évaluation d'une expérience dans l'aménagement de l'environnement quotidien. L'expérience avait pour but de créer un milieu utilisé par les enfants, qui sont les principaux utilisateurs de l'environnement quotidien. Le nouvel aménagement était également destiné à faciliter et même encourager une utilisation plus variée du milieu. En observant le comportement des enfants dans le quartier expérimental et la zone aménagée d'une façon plus conventionnelle, le chercheur a déterminé dans quelle mesure les urbanistes de la municipalité de Delft avaient réussi.

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[3] Je traite de ces quatre projets de recherche en m'inspirant étroitement des rapports des chercheurs.

Les résultats démontrent que les idées se sont concrétisées au moins partiellement. Dans la zone conventionnelle, les enfants se concentrent en certains endroits, comme les trottoirs, les lieux de verdure et les terrains de jeux. Dans le quartier expérimental, tous les groupes d'âge se servent également d'autres endroits pour jouer; les enfants utilisent d'une manière plus dynamique les lieux où ils choisissent de le faire; ils changent plus rapidement d'endroits, ce qui indique une meilleure intégration de ces derniers et un passage facile de l'un à l'autre. Dans la zone plus conventionnelle, ils sont plus souvent accompagnés par des adultes, surtout quand ils ont moins de 4 ans. En d'autres termes, il est probable que les adultes considèrent le milieu du quartier expérimental comme suffisamment sûr pour laisser leurs enfants jouer par eux-mêmes.

Le nouvel aménagement n'a pas réussi à créer des activités plus variées; sur ce plan, aucune différence n'a été notée entre les deux secteurs. Certains âges et certaines activités semblent aller tellement de pair que l'aménagement n'influe pas sur le genre de loisirs; ils sont très semblables pour les mêmes groupes d'âge dans les deux quartiers.

L'étude de certains endroits par une méthode d'observation donnée révèle que l'aménagement peut engendrer des activités plus variées. L'utilisation de l'espace autour des entrées et des sorties d'appartements montre notamment que l'idée à la base du quartier expérimental s'est concrétisée au niveau de l'aménagement de l'environnement quotidien. Les résultats permettent de conclure qu'il y a bien eu intégration au travers du micro-aménagement de ces endroits et qu'une utilisation plus poussée et multifonctionnelle est donc possible. Même si les modifications dans l'aménagement sont relativement modestes, la plus petite innovation produit en fin de compte des résultats différents, par rapport aux types d'aménagement antérieurs, plus monofonctionnels.

Les résultats démontrent clairement qu'avec le nouvel aménagement, le milieu en plein air est utilisé différemment. Il est plus multifonctionnel, permet une utilisation plus efficace et présente aussi davantage d'attraits pour les jeunes. Il ne faudrait pas oublier, cependant, qu'il ne s'agit là que d'un premier pas. Les résultats paraissent prometteurs, mais il va falloir beaucoup expérimenter.

1. Méthodes de recherche

On a utilisé différents genres d'observations pour la recherche. Les observateurs ont noté le comportement des enfants d'après un code attribué à chaque catégorie d'activité. Ces activités sont répertoriées au tableau 3, qui compare leur poids respectif dans le quartier expérimental et le quartier conventionnel.

2. Conclusions

Bien que la fiabilité des observations soit vérifiée, je pense que beaucoup de renseignements et d'implications sont perdus de vue lors de l'interprétation entre le moment de l'observation et celui de la classification des comportements. A mon avis, les catégories sont trop abstraites pour donner l'idée qu'elles devraient des comportements. D'importantes différences en réalité ne sont pas appréciées, de sorte que les observations faites sont moins significatives.

TABLEAU 3

ACTIVITES	QUARTIER DE REFERENCE	QUARTIER EXPERIMENTAL
Repos ou quiétude	7.1%	17.8%
Jeux de ballon	0.0%	0.0%
Jeux actifs avec des moyens trouvés sur place	7.1%	5.0%
Jeux actifs avec d'autres moyens	23.5%	39.6%
Jeux actifs sans moyens	3.1%	2.0%
Passage par le secteur	55.1%	27.7%
Jeux avec des moyens naturels trouvés sur place	2.0%	5.0%
Activités avec des plantes et des animaux	1.0%	0.0%
Jeux d'imitation	0.0%	0.0%
Comportement incorrect	1.0%	1.0%
Changements ou interruptions d'activités	0.0%	2.0%
TOTAL:	99.9%	100.1%

b) Sécurité en matière de circulation dans le milieu d'habitation

En 1976 la seconde phase de l'étude de Güttinger, intitulée "La sécurité en matière de circulation dans deux quartiers d'habitation de Delft" s'est achevée avec la publication du rapport "La sécurité de l'enfant dans les zones d'habitation; partie 2: Utilisation d'une méthode d'étude des confrontations dans une enquête sur place".

La première phase de l'étude était axée sur la mise au point d'un outil fiable pour prévoir les accidents de circulation des enfants. La soi-disante technique d'étude des confrontations (où une grave confrontation entre l'enfant et l'usager de la route est utilisée à la place du véritable accident, comme critère de la sécurité en matière de circulation) fut employée dans une enquête sur place à Delft. L'enquête avait un double but:

1. Evaluer l'utilité du nouvel outil pour juger de la sécurité en matière de circulation;
2. Elucider certains aspects touchant la sécurité en matière de circulation d'une expérience d'urbanisme à Delft.

L'expérience de Delft vise à élargir les possibilités d'utilisation par les enfants des espaces publics environnant le foyer, en intégrant des endroits du milieu (notamment les routes, les trottoirs, les zones de verdure, les terrains de jeux et les entrées d'appartements) qui sont généralement séparés dans les quartiers conventionnels. Les différentes catégories d'usagers - enfants, adultes, piétons, véhicules - ont été, par suite de cette démarche, aussi intégrées. L'aménagement, toutefois, cherche à assujettir la circulation aux autres usages. L'idée sous-jacente est que les contacts entre enfants et véhicules devraient être possibles, même s'ils ne devraient jamais mener à des confrontations.

Les résultats des deux méthodes utilisées pour l'étude (observation des personnes et observation des endroits) sont relativement cohérents. Par rapport à un quartier plus conventionnel, les contacts entre enfants et véhicules sont beaucoup plus fréquents dans le quartier expérimental, comme on pouvait s'y attendre avec l'intégration des deux catégories d'usagers. Chose plus importante toutefois, les confrontations entre les deux y sont aussi plus graves.

On a observé des conséquences directes et indirectes de l'aménagement:

1. Un effet indirect est le degré de surveillance différent exercé par les adultes sur les enfants dans la circulation. Dans le quartier de référence apparemment moins sûr (où l'aménagement favorise les véhicules), les enfants sont plus souvent accompagnés par des grandes personnes.

2. Une influence directe sur les résultats provient de la façon dont les piétons et les usagers de véhicules s'aperçoivent. La mesure dans laquelle la vue est dégagée ou non influe sur le nombre des contacts, leur gravité, et l'efficacité de la surveillance. La visibilité dans un endroit peut être telle que même un adulte est impuissant à prévenir des confrontations sérieuses.

En d'autres termes, dans le quartier de référence apparemment peu sûr (à forte circulation) mais dégagé, peu de confrontations graves surviennent entre enfants et conducteurs de véhicules parce qu'ils peuvent s'apercevoir. La surveillance relativement étroite exercée par les adultes a un effet bénéfique supplémentaire. Par contre, dans le quartier expérimental apparemment sûr (à faible circulation), où les véhicules ne sont pas bien visibles, des confrontations plus graves surviennent entre enfants et conducteurs. Ici, la surveillance exercée par les adultes a peu d'effet.

La méthode d'étude des confrontations s'est avérée utile pour déterminer les endroits et les cas où ont lieu des contacts et des confrontations sérieuses, et pour corroborer l'hypothèse voulant que le degré de visibilité réciproque soit responsable des confrontations graves. Avec cette méthode, on peut se faire une bonne idée, en relativement peu de temps, de l'interaction entre les différentes catégories d'usagers dans un quartier d'habitation. Vu les résultats prometteurs obtenus sur les plans fiabilité

et applicabilité avec la méthode d'étude des confrontations, on va poursuivre les recherches. Celles-ci (qui seront menées en collaboration avec l'Institut de recherche sur la sécurité en matière de circulation routière) porteront principalement sur la valeur des confrontations graves en tant que moyens de prévoir des accidents. Les observations seront effectuées sur des tronçons routiers notoires pour des accidents impliquant des enfants.

c) Projets de démonstrations en aménagement urbain

Le gouvernement a décidé, dans l'intérêt du bon aménagement des nouveaux "woonerven", de mettre en chantier deux projets dits "de démonstration" en matière de réaménagement urbain. Dans les municipalités de Rijswijk et de Eindhoven, des instituts de recherche sont ainsi en train d'évaluer:

1. la circulation
2. la sécurité
3. le milieu physique
4. les effets socio-économiques
5. l'utilisation des espaces publics:
   a) le genre d'usagers
   b) le genre d'usages

Le projet a pour objet d'explorer tout un ensemble de possibilités pour réaménager l'espace urbain dans les lieux de rassemblement et les zones de circulation. Trois options s'offrent:

1. modifier les conditions existantes, par des moyens simples uniquement, de manière à différencier les lieux de rassemblement des zones de circulation;
2. atténuer, par des remaniements modérés, les pires défauts de la circulation;
3. convertir toute la zone en woonerf.

Les résultats n'ont pas encore été officiellement publiés. Toutefois, comme je suis membre d'un des groupes de recherche - l'Institut de sociologie appliquée de Nijmegen - je peux en rapporter officieusement certains:

1. Dans les deux municipalités, les enfants entre l'âge de 8 et 15 ans se sentent plus en sécurité que ne le pensent les adultes, quand ils jouent dans la rue.
2. Ils se disent à peine dérangés par les vélos ou les vélomoteurs, mais bien plus ennuyés par les véhicules et les voitures en stationnement.
3. Environ 50% des enfants trouvent qu'il n'y a pas suffisamment d'espaces libres pour jouer dans leur rue. Un peu moins disent la même chose de tout le quartier. Sur ce plan aussi, les adultes ont une vue pire des choses.

d) L'enfant dans son milieu d'habitation

Joost van Andel, psychologue à l'Université de Leiden, et moi-même avons collaboré en 1978 à un projet de recherche visant à étudier l'influence du cadre d'habitation sur les jeux de l'enfant.

Nous avons adapté la méthode utilisée par Güttinger et Ackermans, en nous servant principalement de la technique d'observation mais avec d'autres catégories d'activités. Voici certaines de nos conclusions:

1. Il y a une corrélation importante entre les activités de l'enfant et l'aménagement du cadre d'habitation: si l'enfant se voit offrir davantage de possibilités, il les exploite. Des aménagements et des installations plus variées dans les espaces de jeux tant d'anciens que de nouveaux quartiers sont utilisés d'une manière plus variée.

2. Dans chaque cadre, le genre des activités est essentiellement le même. Il est lié à l'âge, au sexe et à des endroits semblables.

3. Les références décrites dans la première partie de l'exposé semblent convenir pour évaluer et comparer des aspects des cadres d'habitation.

V. LA PARTICIPATION CIVIQUE A L'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN DEVRAIT EGALEMENT INCLURE L'ENFANT

Aux Pays-Bas, la participation de tous les adultes au processus administratif et, notamment, à l'aménagement en tout genre est une chose de plus en plus communément admise. Naturellement, l'intégration de la participation à l'administration courante pose encore un peu partout bien des problèmes. C'est en effet une question très complexe qui touche plusieurs disciplines, comme la gestion, la justice, la sociologie, la psychologie et les sciences politiques. Elle met également en cause le processus politique, car elle suppose un élargissement du système et de la scène politiques.

La participation à l'aménagement des collectivités locales suppose notamment que tous les résidents s'intéressent de très près à la gestion de leur milieu. Elle met en cause les affaires politiques locales, y compris les politiques de partis. Elle permet une plus grande sensibilisation au problème de l'environnement. Aux Pays-Bas, on a vu naître à cet égard un large mouvement ralliant d'innombrables organismes, tant locaux que nationaux, qui veillent sur notre précieux milieu, nos villes et nos quartiers, nos forêts et nos rivières, et cherchent en général à les préserver de la pollution. Nous apprenons encore à donner à la participation civique la place qui lui revient dans notre mentalité et le processus d'aménagement, ainsi qu'à y voir un pas positif; même si elle complique les choses, elle risque d'améliorer en fin de compte la situation.

Mais quel rôle l'enfant peut-il jouer sur ce plan? La réponse à cette question, avons-nous découvert, est liée à celle de la condition de l'enfant dans notre société, dans nos foyers, dans nos familles, dans nos écoles et dans toutes nos autres institutions. Il m'est difficile d'y répondre. Je viens moi-même seulement de commencer à me la poser en mettant ma profonde confiance dans l'enfance au service de l'idée que son originalité, sa richesse, sa sagesse et son honnêteté naturelle ont beaucoup à nous apporter.

J.W. de Zeeuw a soulevé cette question dans un projet de recherche ayant pour thème "L'enfant - la participation - le cadre de vie", qu'il a entrepris au printemps 1979. Il part principalement de l'hypothèse qu'en excluant l'enfant de l'aménagement de notre cadre de vie, nous nous privons d'une mine d'idées et d'expériences. Il s'appuie pour cela sur plusieurs idées:

1. Nous négligeons en permanence un apport très précieux en puissance au sein de notre société: ce que l'enfant vit, ressent et pense.
2. Nous devons creuser ce potentiel pour humaniser l'aménagement, car l'enfant peut avoir un point de vue original qui nous échappe peut-être, à nous les adultes.
3. Nous pouvons utiliser le processus administratif comme moyen d'information et recourir à des projets internationaux pour orienter nos enfants et nos jeunes.

Dans ses recherches, de Zeeuw

1. étudie les moyens de travailler avec les enfants
   a) les méthodes de communication
   b) le recours à toutes sortes de moyens pratiques de formuler des propositions concrètes
   c) le cadre ou le mécanisme qui convient le mieux pour oeuvrer (il peut s'agir des écoles, des cercles de jeunes et des projets de développement communautaire);
2. se penche sur le processus administratif pour déterminer les meilleurs points de départ et projets à partir desquels oeuvrer
   a) la meilleure formule pour travailler avec les enfants est probablement de commencer avec des objectifs précis et concrets;
   b) le mieux peut être d'utiliser des projets différents pour les différents groupes d'âge;
   c) l'enfant peut-il devenir un participant à part entière dans des projets d'aménagement plus vastes, comme de tout un quartier ou secteur résidentiel?
   d) comment les administrateurs (fonctionnaires) réagissent-ils quand on sollicite leur concours?

Nous commençons à peine à affronter les nombreux problèmes et à découvrir les nombreux aspects positifs qu'il y a dans l'accession de l'enfance et de la jeunesse à un rang mieux reconnu dans notre société.

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SELEGREND: UNE EXPERIENCE EN MATIERE D'AMENAGEMENT POUR CREER UN MILIEU PLUS PROPICE A L'ENFANT

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La psychologie environnementale est en train de faire lentement son apparition en Norvège. Les Norvégiens ont commencé à consulter des experts en aménagement du milieu de diverses disciplines, et à constituer des comités écologiques. Pourtant, à notre avis, la plupart des grands projets en Norvège sont encore planifiés par des techniciens de l'électricité et de la construction. L'activité agricole, elle aussi, est de plus en plus planifiée par des ingénieurs; les exploitations s'agrandissent et se mécanisent de plus en plus.

Des banlieues sont aménagées par des architectes, des ingénieurs et des spécialistes en matière de transport et de construction. La construction dans le domaine du logement a changé de caractère: la fabrication en série a remplacé la construction individuelle, plutôt lente. De nouvelles zones d'habitation sont aménagées par des urbanistes, des économistes, des avocats et des techniciens.[1] Les résultats ont été souvent fort critiqués. Ainsi, dans une banlieue d'Oslo construite au cours des années 1970, il n'y avait que quelques terrains de jeux, desservant mal les habitations. Le voisinage était venteux, monotone, et l'on pouvait entendre pas mal de bruit à une très grande distance. Les parents vivaient dans la crainte constante d'accidents de circulation; cependant, rien n'avait été prévu pour pouvoir jouer à l'intérieur des immeubles. Les enfants finissaient par se montrer violents et destructeurs dans leurs jeux, les adolescents étaient laissés pour compte et les résidents avaient peu de rapports.

En Norvège, environ 70% de la population vit dans des villes, des localités ou des banlieues. L'urbanisation a été importante: entre 1962 et 1970, la population urbaine a augmenté de 10%.[2]

En Norvège, la psychologie environnementale a été une discipline très éclectique, explorant tous les domaines pertinents. Toutefois, nous pensons que les idées de Maslow ont eu une énorme influence,[3] à l'instar de la démarche plus écologique préconisée par W.H. Ittelson:

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1 Roe, Bjrn: Mennesket og det fysiske milj, NTH, Trondheim, 1977.

2 Raundalen, M. & Raundalen, T.S.: Er du pa var side! Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 1979.

3 Kjondal, J.: Oppvekst i boligomrade, Psykologist Instituut, Universitet i Oslo, 1976.

"La psychologie environnementale ... voit l'homme non pas comme un produit passif de son milieu, mais comme un être dynamique qui agit sur son milieu et est influencé en retour par lui. En changeant son monde, l'homme se change. Un principe directeur dans ce domaine est ce que nous avons appelé l'interaction dynamique entre l'homme et son milieu. L'idée traditionnelle d'un milieu figé auquel l'organisme doit s'adapter sous peine de périr est remplacée par la conception écologique qui met l'accent sur le rôle de l'organisme dans la création de son propre environnement."[4]

Un ensemble de méthodes est utilisé; on mentionne souvent la démarche classique de Craik:[5] des études ont été réalisées par divers moyens, comme l'envoi de questionnaires par la poste et l'observation directe.[6] Parmi certains des sujets explorés jusqu'à ce jour, on peut citer la violence dans l'environnement de l'enfant[7], les réseaux sociaux de l'enfance dans les régions urbaines et rurales,[8] l'utilisation du temps et de l'espace par l'enfant,[9] et les accidents de la circulation.[10]

Une autre méthode, appelée la recherche active, englobe des projets où le chercheur fait partie du groupe étudié et tente de décrire les expériences centrales qui ont lieu. Selegrend, un complexe d'habitations situé à 10 km de Bergen, la deuxième ville de Norvège, est le site d'un projet de ce genre. Nous allons essayer d'exposer brièvement nos travaux jusqu'ici - y compris le premier bilan - qui ont consisté à interroger des mères d'enfants de 5 à 6 ans et à faire des observations sur place.

Selegrend est un complexe de 92 maisons jumelées comprenant 112 appartements et groupées le long de rues étroites, sinueuses; il couvre une superficie de 29 000 m^2. L'aménagement, auquel les futurs résidents ont

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4 Ittelson, William, Harold M. Proshansky, Leanne G. Rivlin & Gary H. Winkel: An Introduction to Environmental Psychology, N.Y., Holt, Rinehart & Winston Inc., 1974, p. 5.

5 Craik, K.H.: "Environmental Psychology" dans New Directions in Psychology VI, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, N.Y., 1970.

6 Lian, R., Thaule, J.: Barn og fysik milj, Psykologist Instituut Universitet i Oslo, 1972.

7 Raundalen, M.: Tid for barn, Cappelen Forlag, 1975.

8 Miljeteig-Olssen, P.: Barns sosiale nettverk, Psychologist Instituut, Universitet i Oslo, 1977.

9 Iversen, Oddmar: Barn og bomilj, Universitet i Bergen, Psykologist Instituut, 1978. Hjelle, J.: Skole-og hjemmemilj, Universitet i Bergen, Psykologist Instituut, 1978; voir également Raundalen, M.: Tid for barn, op.cit.

10 Schioldborg, P.: Barnas Trafikklubb, Universitet i Oslo, 1976; voir également Raundalen, M. & Raundalen, T.S.: Er du pa var side!, op. cit.

participé sous la direction des responsables élus, a débuté en 1971 et la construction, à laquelle ont été aussi largement associés les intéressés, s'est terminée en 1975-1976.

Le versement initial a été d'environ 20 000 dollars américains pour les plus grands appartements (160 m^2); la Banque d'Etat pour le logement a consenti des hypothèques de 40 ans à 5,5% d'intérêt. Les futurs occupants ont décidé de l'agencement de leur logement; ils ont payé plus cher pour des salles de bains, des fenêtres, etc., supplémentaires. Certains d'entre eux ont acquitté toute la somme initiale en participant à la construction. Les gens à faible revenu ont pu obtenir des prêts du gouvernement ou des subventions pour payer les frais fixes se montant par mois à environ 200 dollars américains pour les grands appartements et 100 dollars pour les plus petits. A peu près 40% des unités ont été réservées à des travailleurs étrangers, des familles monoparentales, des personnes âgées et des handicapés physiques et mentaux - tous des gens que l'on ne trouve généralement pas dans les complexes de maisons jumelées de qualité.

Nous considérons comme plausibles les hypothèses suivantes sur les caractéristiques d'un bon logement pour l'enfant:

1. Les habitations familiales devraient être basses afin de faciliter les communications entre les logements et leurs environs.
2. La densité d'habitation devrait être élevée afin que les résidents de toutes les catégories puissent entrer facilement en contact, à pied, avec leurs homologues.
3. Il devrait y avoir un large éventail naturel de gens afin que les enfants puissent faire connaissance de personnes de milieux, de conditions et d'âges différents.
4. Il devrait y avoir un éventail de ménages, pas seulement des familles conventionnelles.
5. Des emplois rémunérés convenables devraient être disponibles dans le complexe.
6. Les adultes devraient effectuer régulièrement des travaux à l'extérieur en toute saison. Des travaux de réparation et d'entretien s'imposent et permettent à l'enfant de découvrir l'interaction sociale entre ses parents et de participer lui-même à des activités significatives.
7. Il devrait y avoir des terrains et des sites communautaires pour chaque complexe de 50 à 100 appartements, afin que puissent être organisés localement des services comme des classes de jeu et des cercles.
8. La participation des résidents à l'aménagement et la construction devrait stabiliser la population.

Le complexe existe maintenant depuis près de 3 ans; notre impression est que l'expérience se déroule comme prévu. L'hétérogénéité des résidents a été une source d'enrichissement pour le complexe et n'a pas conduit à la formation de petites cliques.

On a prévu d'évaluer les divers objectifs du projet. Les deux premières phases, qui ont consisté à interroger des parents d'enfants de 5 à 6 ans et à observer les activités en plein air, sont maintenant terminées. Pour voir un moyen de comparaison, on a fait la même chose avec un autre complexe semblable.

Vingt questionnaires, remis personnellement dans chaque complexe, ont servi à interroger les intéressés à propos du ménage, des terrains de jeux, des jardins d'enfants, des activités en plein air des enfants, des réseaux sociaux et du degré général de satisfaction avec les conditions de vie dans le complexe. Les observations ont été organisées d'après la démarche de Wright, fondées sur un bilan type qu'il a défini comme "un exposé détaillé, séquentiel et narratif du comportement et de son contexte environnemental immédiat."[11]

Les observations ont été faites entre quinze heures et dix-neuf heures. Les observateurs ont couvert des secteurs déterminés. Aucune période d'observation n'a duré plus de 40 minutes. Ce qui a été noté a été immédiatement consigné, à l'aide d'un magnétophone. Les enregistrements ont été transcrits et revus le jour-même. Vingt observations ont été faites, toutes entre le 8 et le 30 janvier.

La moyenne d'âge des enfants dans les familles qui ont rempli le questionnaire a été de 4,9 ans. Les observations ont englobé tous les enfants aperçus sur le moment. Une différence frappante entre Selegrend et le complexe de référence est ressortie de la première question à propos de ce qu'avaient fait les enfants dans la journée. A Selegrend, presque tous les enfants de 5 et 6 ans fréquentaient le jardin d'enfants, contre 30% seulement dans le complexe de référence. Le revenu familial, la condition sociale, l'âge, la durée d'habitation et les projets de déménagement étaient très semblables dans les deux cas.

On peut voir d'après le tableau 1 que les deux complexes diffèrent énormément sur le plan de l'endroit où vivent les contacts sociaux des résidents. A Selegrend, la plupart des amis des enfants de 5 et 6 ans sont des voisins.

TABLEAU 1: ENDROIT OU VIVENT LES CONTACTS SOCIAUX DES PARENTS

	Selegrend	Complexe de référence
Dans le même complexe	55%	20%
Dans d'autres endroits de la communauté	25%	35%
En dehors de Bergen	10%	25%

Nous savons, par d'autres études norvégiennes, que ce n'est pas habituel.

[11] Wright, W., cité dans Iversen, O., Barn og bomilj, op. cit.

Le tableau 2 montre qu'une bonne amitié avec quelques voisins est le type de contact dominant à Selegrend.

TABLEAU 2: TYPE DE CONTACT AVEC LES VOISINS

	Selegrend	Complexe de référence
Contacts réguliers avec la plupart des résidents	25%	30%
Bonne amitié avec quelques voisins	75%	40%
Rapports normalement polis	20%	40%

Les observations nous ont fourni tout un ensemble de données sur les activités des enfants et les interactions d'une nature plus générale, que nous ne décrirons pas en détail ici. On a également observé des différences entre les sexes dans l'utilisation des installations en plein air.

De la comparaison des deux complexes sont ressorties deux grandes différences, l'une probablement de nature structurelle, l'autre de nature sociale. Comme les observations ont été faites en janvier, on s'attendrait à ce que le ski et la luge soient pratiqués. Ils l'étaient beaucoup plus à Selegrend: les enfants du complexe de référence pouvaient skier à plusieurs endroits et ne le faisaient pas, tandis qu'à Selegrend la plupart se retrouvaient sur les collines servant aux sports d'hiver. L'autre différence notable était que l'on voyait beaucoup moins d'enfants jouer en plein air l'après-midi à Selegrend: on en a aperçu beaucoup courant d'une maison à l'autre avec des jouets sous le bras. On a découvert qu'à Selegrend la plupart des enfants de 5 et 6 ans jouent à l'intérieur avec des amis l'après-midi, le jour tombant très tôt en hiver chez nous.

On semblerait en droit de conclure que l'expérience de Selegrend, fondée sur une étroite participation à l'aménagement et la construction, un mélange voulu d'âges, de professions et de conditions sociales, et une densité d'habitation relativement élevée, a contribué à créer un milieu amical pour les enfants de 5 et 6 ans et leurs parents. Il reste à voir si une étude systématique confirmera la même chose pour les autres groupes d'âge.

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MAIS C'EST LA QUE L'ENFANT EST APPELE A VIVRE: L'EXPLOITATION DU TISSU SOCIAL URBAIN DANS L'INTERET DE L'ENFANT

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I. INTRODUCTION

La philosophie populaire veut que la communauté se meure, que la communauté soit morte. Le quotidien du matin, la revue hebdomadaire, la télévision et la publication savante déplorent tous la chose. Dans cet exposé, je vais analyser certaines des théories et des données empiriques sur le fonctionnement des communautés d'aujourd'hui, et me pencher sur le genre d'appui qui les aiderait à fonctionner d'une manière propre à améliorer la vie de l'enfant. La communauté est peut-être morte ou moribonde, elle n'en reste pas moins un aspect important du contexte dans lequel grandit l'enfant.

De plus, les communautés peuvent fonctionner d'une façon qui permet à l'adulte de tisser divers types de réseaux d'entraide personnels. Vu la très forte mobilité de la société, le taux croissant de divorces et la multiplication des familles monoparentales, aider les parents à tisser des réseaux d'entraide personnels et communautaires peut être le meilleur moyen de consolider l'appui aux enfants.

Je vais ici analyser brièvement certaines théories sur les réseaux socio-communautaires, puis étudier la communauté "à responsabilité limitée" d'aujourd'hui (Janowitz, 1952), certains moyens de créer des groupes communautaires solides et la façon dont ils peuvent servir l'enfant, tant directement que par la consolidation des réseaux d'adultes.

II. CERTAINS TYPES DE RESEAUX SOCIO-COMMUNAUTAIRES

Barry Wellman a vu trois types de théories sur la communauté: la "communauté perdue", la "communauté sauvée" et la "communauté libérée" (Wellman, 1979). La première théorie, développée par les sociologues au XIXe siècle, était que les gens dans les villes vivaient seuls ou au sein de familles cellulaires, isolées et aliénées. La seconde théorie, la "communauté sauvée", "voyait" une communauté dans les quartiers ethniques où les gens vivaient au sein de cercles familiaux élargis en se visitant constamment entre parents. La vie tournait autour de la paroisse, du bar et de l'épicerie du coin du quartier. La rue était l'endroit où l'on rencontrait des amis, échangeait des potins et s'observait. La troisième théorie considère les rapports de chaque individu avec les autres, qu'il les connaisse personnellement ou ait indirectement des contacts avec eux par le biais de gens connus

qui les connaissent. Ces réseaux peuvent être "étroitement liés", comme dans le cas de la "communauté sauvée", ou bien "lâchement liés" quand les personnes que connaît l'individu ne se connaissent pas automatiquement entre elles. Les individus diffèrent du point de vue du type de relations qu'ils souhaitent, et les communautés diffèrent du point de vue de celui qui risque le plus de se développer (Bott, 1957, 1971; Wellman, 1979).

Deux autres types de relations - les "liens ténus" et les "relations secondaires intimes" - sont importants dans les communautés. "Liens ténus" est la façon dont Granovetter appelle les rapports entre gens qui n'ont pas de contacts réguliers, comme les anciens camarades de classes qui se retrouvent lors d'une réunion. Les cadres intermédiaires les ont jugés plus utiles que les liens "étroits" pour accéder à des postes (Granovetter, 1973, 1974). Ils peuvent être importants quand il s'agit de fournir des renseignements et d'avoir accès à des gens vivant à l'extérieur du quartier.

"Relations secondaires intimes" est une expression que j'ai trouvée pour décrire des rapports qui présentent certaines caractéristiques de relations primaires et secondaires. Je les ai observées entre membres de conseils d'administration bénévoles dans plusieurs communautés. Dans les "relations secondaires intimes", les intéressés éprouvent un sentiment de cordialité et de rapprochement. Ils se connaissent suffisamment pour se faire confiance ou savoir se méfier. Toutefois, en général, ils ne se côtoient pas socialement en dehors du cadre des "relations secondaires intimes" et ne parlent pas de leur famille, de leurs goûts ou de leurs affaires personnelles. Leur engagement a des limites. C'est pourquoi, quand elles surviennent, les "relations secondaires intimes" donnent matière à un engagement intensif d'habitude caractéristique de relations plus primaires, mais très clairement limité. Elles permettent aux gens d'avoir une certaine intimité, tout en gardant certaines distances (Wireman, 1977a, 1978a et 1978b).

Pour une communauté, les relations secondaires intimes peuvent jouer un rôle important en permettant aux nouveaux venus de se sentir rapidement à l'aise, tout en leur évitant de se lancer prématurément dans des relations d'amitié. Elles peuvent aider les individus en période de difficultés matrimoniales et permettre aux femmes de développer de nouvelles aptitudes et de trouver un réconfort sans se trouver un emploi ou avoir une liaison. Elles permettent également des rapports significatifs entre personnes de races, de classes ou de conditions socio-économiques différentes. Elles semblent se développer autour de la conduite d'affaires publiques dans un endroit public. L'endroit public contribue à asseoir le caractère public des responsabilités fonctionnelles en jeu. Il évite la relation hôte-invité que sous-entend souvent la réunion à domicile. Dans le cas de l'enfant, cela signifie que les relations et réseaux de relations communautaires de ce genre peuvent offrir un accès au monde extérieur, tout en permettant aux voisins de divers milieux d'organiser en commun le milieu et les services de façon à ce qu'ils répondent aux besoins de leurs enfants.

III. LA COMMUNAUTE "A RESPONSABILITE LIMITEE"

Quel que soit le genre de la communauté et des relations en son sein, l'aménagement, les services et les installations propres au milieu

sont déterminés non seulement par les rapports individuels entre les adultes qui y vivent, mais aussi par tout un ensemble de forces exogènes. C'est ce dont je vais parler maintenant.

Roland Warren a décrit l'intervention d'un "profond changement" dans la vie américaine, qui s'est traduit par une "orientation croissante des groupes communautaires vers des systèmes extracommunautaires" et un affaiblissement correspondant de la cohésion et de l'autonomie communautaires (Warren, 1978, p. 53). Le changement est survenu par le biais d'une division accrue du travail, de la différenciation des intérêts et du regroupement, de l'intensification des rapports systémiques avec l'ensemble de la société, de la bureaucratisation et de l'impersonnalisation, du transfert de fonctions aux entreprises commerciales et au gouvernement, de l'urbanisation et de la suburbanisation, ainsi que du changement des valeurs. Warren fait une distinction entre la configuration verticale de la communauté, "les relations au travers desquelles ils se branchent sur l'ensemble de la société par delà la communauté" (Warren, 1978, p. 240) et la configuration horizontale des "relations structurelles et fonctionnelles de ses divers groupes et sous-systèmes sociaux entre eux" (Warren, 1963, p. 162). Le district scolaire et le service d'assistance sociale du coin peuvent avoir des relations horizontales entre eux, ils auront des relations verticales plus étroites avec les divers organismes étatiques et fédéraux.

Warren a énuméré un certain nombre de critères pour déterminer dans quelle mesure les services peuvent être assurés d'une manière adaptée aux besoins de la communauté particulière; il s'agit de:

1. l'identification psychologique
2. l'autonomie
3. la coïncidence des frontières
4. l'intégration horizontale

Evaluer l'identification psychologique signifie déterminer si l'institution se considère comme partie intégrante de la communauté. Ainsi, une paroisse dont les membres vivent dans les environs est plus susceptible d'avoir un personnel psychologiquement identifié avec le quartier et ses besoins que le bureau de poste du coin.

L'autonomie concerne la mesure dans laquelle l'institution arrête ses propres politiques et objectifs et peut donc les modifier en fonction des besoins locaux. Ainsi, les concessions à hamburgers d'une chaîne ne peuvent pas modifier leur menu pour y inscrire des plats ethniques.

La coïncidence des frontières fait allusion au fait que la plupart des institutions ont des frontières qui ne coïncident pas avec celles d'un quartier ou des autres institutions le desservant. Les gens qui habitent de part et d'autre d'une rue peuvent relever de circonscriptions électorales et de commissions scolaires différentes, d'un même service de police, de pompiers ou de parcs, mais non d'hôpital. De plus, chaque organisme fédéral et étatique a des lignes de conduite différentes pour ses programmes et des exigences différentes pour la participation civique à ces derniers. Le fait que les frontières et les exigences ne coïncident pas rend extrêmement difficile une organisation et une coordination rationnelles des services.

L'intégration horizontale réfère à la solidité des liens que l'institution a avec d'autres institutions du quartier, par comparaison à celles de l'extérieur. Ainsi, un détaillant local peut avoir des relations très étroites avec un groupement de quartier; un bureau qui tient la comptabilité d'une grosse entreprise nationale est par contre moins dépendant de la clientèle du coin. De plus, un employé du bureau auxiliaire d'une organisation nationale n'est généralement pas promu d'après sa contribution au bien-être de la communauté locale.

Qu'est-ce que cela signifie pour l'enfant? Cela implique que les parents ont un contrôle restreint sur le milieu et les institutions qui assurent les services. Les grandes décisions touchant les revenus, les tendances pédagogiques et la santé risquent d'être prises par les administrations nationales. Pourtant, la communauté locale est en fin de compte le siège de bien des services et des installations; et, surtout, elle constitue l'environnement quotidien de l'enfant. Elle peut s'étudier sous l'angle des besoins de l'enfant pour déterminer quelles sortes d'améliorations locales pourraient être apportées, soit en modifiant directement le type des services et des installations fournies, soit en consolidant les réseaux aidant les parents dans leur rôle. Cela peut se faire par l'entremise de groupements civiques solides.

IV. LA PARTICIPATION CIVIQUE ET LES GROUPEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Aux Etats-Unis, il y a traditionnellement eu une participation bénévole importante aux affaires gouvernementales. L'idée d'une participation civique intentionnelle, organisée, aux programmes gouvernementaux a fait rapidement du chemin après l'entrée en vigueur de la Economic Opportunity Act (Loi sur les possibilités économiques) de 1964, préconisant "la plus grande participation possible" des intéressés. Depuis, un certain nombre d'organismes ont pris des dispositions pour associer le public à leurs programmes.

Les définitions de la participation civique varient, mais elles visent le plus souvent à aider le gouvernement représentatif à rendre l'administration exécutant les programmes plus réceptive aux désirs de la population. Deux grands objectifs sont de:

1. influer sur les décisions politiques et l'affectation des ressources;
2. participer à l'élaboration, à l'application et au contrôle de certains programmes (Yin, 1973).

En général, l'application des programmes nécessite une collaboration entre l'administration et le public; or, il y a souvent conflits entre les moyens quand il s'agit de mobiliser davantage de ressources.

Les avantages pour les organismes résident dans un appui potentiel des programmes et une plus grande efficacité, ceux pour les individus dans un épanouissement personnel, une atténuation du sentiment d'aliénation, l'obtention d'améliorations et le tissage de liens personnels et communautaires,

notamment de relations secondaires intimes. La participation civique, toutefois, n'a pas été en général un instrument de réforme sociale très efficace (Wireman, 1977b).

Pour que la participation civique soit efficace, il est utile, sinon indispensable qu'elle réunisse les conditions suivantes:

1. Le groupement doit être clairement habilité à participer, si possible aux termes de la Loi;
2. Le groupement doit être suffisamment puissant pour se faire respecter (un groupement communautaire bien représentatif est davantage respecté par les décisionnaires qu'un groupement ayant une mince "clientèle");
3. Il doit avoir en permanence accès à l'information et aux organes de décisions tout au long du processus de planification, notamment avant la prise des grandes décisions (par exemple budgétaires);
4. Il doit se faire aider par un personnel et des experts de confiance, relevant de préférence de lui;
5. Il doit être versé dans l'action de groupe;
6. Il doit avoir accès à des paliers supérieurs de gouvernement ou aux tribunaux si les autorités locales refusent de le laisser participer d'une manière valable (Wireman, 1977b).

Tandis que certains groupements civiques continuent à mettre l'accent sur la participation à des programmes gouvernementaux, d'autres s'emploient à exploiter eux-mêmes des programmes. Certains en élaborent et exploitent un ou deux, comme une garderie d'enfants ou une coopérative d'achat de produits alimentaires. Bien des programmes les plus originaux ont été lancés par des groupements communautaires locaux, puis transposés en projets pilote par le gouvernement et finalement convertis en programmes nationaux. D'autres groupements se sont lancés dans d'ambitieux programmes de revitalisation urbaine faisant intervenir la réorganisation du logement et le développement économique (Hallman, 1977; Perlman, 1976; Kollias, 1977). La politique urbaine du président Carter met notamment l'accent sur le quartier et l'action bénévole des citoyens locaux.

Les groupements communautaires peuvent beaucoup faire pour améliorer le milieu de l'enfant qu'est le quartier. Voici plusieurs moyens d'y parvenir:

a) Services et installations

Les résidents peuvent influer par leur action sur le nombre et le type des services et des installations. Prenez, par exemple, le besoin fondamental de nourriture. Bien que nourrir l'enfant est avant tout la responsabilité de la famille, des groupements communautaires peuvent organiser tout un ensemble de projets utiles, notamment des cours de diététique, des coopératives d'achat et des jardins communautaires. Ils peuvent faire pression sur les établissements locaux au sujet de la qualité, de la variété et

du prix des produits, ainsi que des heures d'affaire; ils peuvent faire pression sur les institutions municipales à propos de l'emplacement et de la réglementation sanitaire générale des commerces, ainsi que de l'utilité d'obtenir des timbres d'alimentation. Ils peuvent collaborer avec des organismes nationaux qui exercent des pressions à propos de questions relevant d'institutions non locales.

Obtenir les services et les installations voulues implique également de s'assurer que le site est convenablement aménagé et que les préposés sont réceptifs aux besoins de l'enfant. Une femme s'est ainsi plainte de la longue attente à subir dans une salle d'accueil d'hôpital où il n'y avait rien à faire. A la demande de la direction, elle l'a réaménagée en une aire de jeux (Lewis, 1979).

On a réussi à associer l'enfant lui-même à l'aménagement de parcs. Robin Moore a conçu une cour d'école écologique comportant de la terre, de l'eau et des jardins, principalement aménagée par les résidents locaux et leurs enfants. Certains aménageurs sont persuadés que si les enfants - adolescents compris - ne sont pas associés à son aménagement, le parc ne sera pas respecté (Hester, 1975). La même chose vaut pour les jardins communautaires. Lorsqu'on l'a interrogé la seconde année de l'aménagement de jardins, un jardinier de Philadelphie a fait observé qu'il n'y avait pas eu d'actes de vandalisme cette année-là parce que tous les anciens vandales s'étaient vus attribuer leur parcelle (Goldstein, 1979).

b) Aménagement communautaire et responsabilité au niveau du quartier

Assurer la participation civique et associer les résidents à l'aménagement en vue d'adapter l'espace aux besoins de l'enfant ne revient pas seulement à négocier avec des organismes municipaux pour obtenir davantage de terrains de jeux. La chose implique que tous les résidents et toutes les institutions du quartier s'emploient à rendre l'environnement agréable pour l'enfant.

Récemment, l'auteur mangeait au rapide service du voisinage. Une petite fille d'environ huit ans demanda très poliment un verre d'eau. La jeune serveuse lui expliqua courtoisement que, suivant les règles de l'établissement, elle ne pouvait servir de l'eau qu'aux gens qui commandaient quelque chose. L'auteur, qui avait droit à un verre d'eau, le donna à l'enfant qui la remercia timidement. L'épisode, quoiqu'anodin, avait quelque chose de bizarrement choquant. Il dénotait un manque de générosité qui paraissait non seulement déplaisant, mais déplacé, compte tenu des frictions existant entre les commerces du coin et le complexe avoisinant de logements publics où résidait sans doute l'enfant.

Un autre aspect de la même philosophie générale est la nécessité d'arrêter des normes au niveau du quartier qui permettent aux adultes d'être responsables des enfants dans les endroits publics. La chose s'impose d'autant plus s'il y a des différences raciales et sociales. Dans une communauté où les relations raciales étaient foncièrement bonnes, les blanches étaient en fait terrorisées par des noirs de six ans! Les parents noirs trouvaient insultant que leurs voisins blancs n'exigent pas de leurs enfants un comportement convenable, en en concluant qu'ils partaient du principe qu'on ne

pouvait pas attendre d'enfants noirs qu'ils se comportent aussi bien que les blancs. Des adolescents noirs, fils d'avocats, flânaient en jeans usés autour du centre d'achats et prenaient à parti des clients blancs pour voir s'ils auraient peur; cela marchait souvent, même si c'était le genre de railleries auxquelles se livraient les propres enfants de ces blancs. Les préjugés raciaux se trouvaient alors renforcés des deux côtés. De temps à autre, un adulte disait aux adolescents de bien se conduire, ce qu'ils faisaient (Wireman, 1977a; Burkhart, 1975).

c) Sensibilisation par les institutions de l'extérieur

Comme je l'ai déjà dit et vais le montrer de nouveau dans la partie qui suit, bien des facteurs qui influent sur la vie de l'enfant ne sauraient être modifiés au niveau du quartier. Les groupements de quartiers ont néanmoins largement contribué à attirer l'attention de la nation sur les grands problèmes. Ainsi, les banques municipales ont longtemps réinvesti dans les faubourgs l'argent déposé par les résidents municipaux, en refusant en revanche de l'hypothéquer pour les quartiers municipaux. La législation nationale adoptée pour remédier à cet état de chose est directement imputable à l'action des organisations communautaires locales. La récente sensibilisation nationale au problème des femmes battues est due à la lutte concertée de groupements féminins locaux pour créer des foyers à leur intention.

IV. AUTRES MOYENS DE REPONDRE AUX BESOINS DE L'ENFANT

Ainsi donc, l'action communautaire locale peut aider directement à répondre aux besoins de l'enfant; et, de son côté, l'action des associations et institutions communautaires locales peut être renforcée par le biais de la participation civique à l'aménagement. Tous les programmes fédéraux et locaux, ainsi que tous les organismes privés locaux, devraient assurer une telle participation. Comme je l'ai déjà dit, pour que la participation civique soit significative, le public doit avoir l'assistance technique qui convient, être consulté avant la prise des décisions, disposer de l'information voulue et avoir accès aux organes de décision.

L'exploitation communautaire de certains programmes peut être une option à offrir. Tous les groupements communautaires n'ont pas le moyen ou le désir d'exploiter des programmes, mais certains l'ont. D'aucuns ont exploité tout un ensemble de services sociaux et entreprennent un gros effort de réaménagement. Comme toute petite entreprise qui se développe, ils ont besoin de possibilités de financement, de formation en gestion et d'assistance technique.

Diverses sortes d'aides et de formations spécialisées peuvent être offertes concurremment aux dirigeants de différentes organisations communautaires. Vu la mobilité de la société d'aujourd'hui et l'épuisement de la plupart des volontaires après plusieurs années, une formation permanente s'impose si les organisations veulent avoir des dirigeants compétents. Prévoir des lieux de réunion publique peut être non seulement utile, mais nécessaire pour encourager le tissage de relations secondaires intimes exploitables à diverses fins communautaires.

Les communautés locales peuvent également adopter des lignes de conduite et entreprendre des activités qui aident d'autres aspects du tissu social à répondre aux besoins de l'enfant. Parmi les moyens de renforcer le rôle de la famille, il y a offrir un choix plus large de logements et de quartiers. Il faut davantage de logements pour personnes à revenu faible ou moyen, ainsi qu'une lutte énergique contre la discrimination. D'autres options qui ne sont pas souvent offertes actuellement comprennent des chambres supplémentaires ou des logements distincts mais contigüs pour les grands-parents, ainsi que davantage de logements pour personnes âgées ou de maisons de santé dans les quartiers. Il faut se pencher sur les règlements régissant les divers types de programmes publics pour s'assurer qu'ils permettent à un parent éloigné, comme une tante ou un cousin, de vivre comme un membre de la famille. On peut aménager habitations et quartiers de façon à ce qu'ils répondent mieux aux besoins sociaux et ménagers des femmes seules. Ainsi, une aide pour les réparations à la maison sera peut-être tout ce dont aura besoin une mère récemment divorcée, séparée ou veuve pour ne pas avoir à quitter le domicile et le quartier où elle a longtemps vécu avec ses enfants. Il faut aussi que des services de garde d'enfants à plein temps, à mi-temps et après l'école soient plus largement disponibles.

Dans certains cas, un type d'assistance peut en remplacer un autre. Ainsi, des programmes de diététique maternelle et infantile peuvent compenser la faiblesse des salaires féminins due à la discrimination; la garde publique de l'enfant peut remplacer celle par les grands-parents. Parfois, cependant, le renforcement d'un aspect du tissu social ne va pas aider davantage l'enfant; ainsi, lorsqu'il s'agit d'aider des jeunes de familles à faible revenu à faire un choix d'emploi réaliste, le renforcement de leurs "liens ténus" et de l'ensemble de leurs "relations secondaires intimes" peut leur donner un bien meilleur accès à des débouchés en dehors du quartier que celui de leurs rapports avec la parenté.

Les responsables des programmes peuvent en organiser l'application de façon à maximiser l'aide aux familles, aux groupements et aux institutions communautaires, et les chances d'expansion des réseaux sociaux. Voici notamment certains biais:

1. des jardins communautaires exploités par des résidents du quartier;
2. des programmes d'emploi pour la jeunesse appliqués sous la direction d'un groupement communautaire et offrant des services de réparation et d'isolation aux personnes âgées du quartier;
3. des coopératives, notamment d'alimentation et de logement;
4. des échanges de services, notamment en matière d'instruction particulière, de garde d'enfants, de prêt d'outils, de réparation de domiciles;
5. la prestation locale de tout un ensemble de services par le biais de petits hôtels de ville, de centres médicaux communautaires, d'écoles communautaires et de parcs aménagés par la communauté.

Le quartier peut promouvoir tous les types de réseaux mentionnés. Il faut accorder davantage d'attention à l'aménagement du quartier urbain en général pour déterminer les sortes d'espaces qui favorisent les divers types de relations. (L'application de cette idée au logement pour les personnes âgées est illustrée dans Wireman, 1979b,) Nous savons, toutefois, que le meilleur moyen de renforcer des réseaux est d'éviter de les détruire par un réaménagement inadapté ou une revitalisation aveugle du milieu urbain, qui fait augmenter les taxes et les loyers sans tenir compte des répercussions sur les résidents.

Ce ne sont là que quelques façons de consolider familles, réseaux et institutions communautaires. Ce renforcement constitue peut-être le meilleur moyen d'aider convenablement l'enfant. Même dans notre société mobile, l'enfant n'a pas un accès autonome aux transports. Pour lui, famille et communauté demeurent importantes, parce que c'est là qu'il est appelé à vivre.

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L'AMENAGEMENT DE L'ESPACE DE VIE DE L'ENFANT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Le psychologue soviétique D.V. Elkonin a décrit très exactement le rôle de l'interaction entre l'enfant et le milieu: "Pour ce qui est du développement de la personnalité d'un enfant, l'environnement devient non une condition de développement, mais une source de développement." (21, 15)

L'optimum pour le milieu urbain est déterminé par la complexité et la complétude de la teneur de tous les composants nécessaires au développement total et harmonieux de l'enfant. En d'autres termes, une construction qui satisfait mieux les besoins biologiques et socialement conditionnés de l'enfant (suivant le schéma de Maslow), et donc les besoins du public en général, s'impose dans une ville et sa banlieue. Il s'ensuit que la conception et la construction des bâtiments qui conviennent devraient être organisées par l'institution sociale spécialement mise sur pied à ces fins. Réciproquement, la qualité d'un bâtiment construit à l'intention de l'enfant peut s'évaluer en fonction de la mesure dans laquelle il remplit son rôle social, et des possibilités qu'il offre à l'enfant.

Kenzo Tange, l'éminent architecte japonais, a dit: "Les architectes et les aménageurs sont les seuls intermédiaires entre la technique et les individus; il est donc très important que tout en faisant progresser la science, ils fassent preuve de plus en plus de créativité." (18, 86-87) Organiser et développer le milieu urbain au moyen de l'architecture de façon à ce qu'il cadre davantage et plus précisément avec les besoins et les intérêts de l'enfant est une tâche scientifique et créative importante. Cet exposé vise à illustrer brièvement le travail accompli dans ce sens en U.R.S.S., et à faire ressortir les moyens de résoudre les problèmes pratiques d'architecture et de construction liés à l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant.

II. LE CONTEXTE SOVIETIQUE

a) L'urbanisation

L'U.R.S.S. est un pays qui se développe activement; 62% des habitants vivent dans des villes (16; 7). Nos villes séculaires font l'objet

de beaucoup d'attention. D'autres villes continuent à se développer; elles connaissent des améliorations et de nouveaux quartiers surgissent. Depuis la grande révolution socialiste d'octobre 1917, 1200 villes ont vu le jour; entre 1976 et 1981, environ 90 nouvelles villes apparaîtront sur la carte.

b) Le réseau des institutions publiques

Le droit des gens à la santé et l'éducation, aux bienfaits de la culture et de la science, et au repos, consacré dans la Constitution soviétique, trouve sa concrétisation dans le réseau complexe des services sociaux. Il se caractérise principalement par un sous-réseau d'institutions pour l'enfance et la jeunesse. Il est universaliste et recouvre tout un ensemble d'institutions spéciales, comme des centres de diététique infantile, des cliniques, des hôpitaux et des sanatoriums, des écoles de musique, d'art et de sport, des bibliothèques, des cinémas et des théâtres en tous genres, des cercles, des parcs et des terrains de jeux pour enfants, et des camps de jeunes.

Le programme adopté au XXII Congrès du Parti communiste de l'Union soviétique (1961) a fixé comme tâche la plus importante et la plus noble d'assurer une enfance heureuse à chaque enfant (12, 98). Les sommes imputées dans le budget national aux services et à l'éducation pour l'enfance ne cessent d'augmenter parallèlement à un effort d'équipement intensif. Entre 1961 et 1975, les dépenses ont augmenté 3,2 fois pour les services aux enfants et 2,6 fois pour l'éducation (22, 207). Le nombre des lits pour enfants dans les hôpitaux a presque doublé, et celui des enfants traités dans des sanatoriums et par des pédiatres s'est accrû 1,6 fois (22, 206).

Le système soviétique de l'éducation publique est le pivot des institutions pour la jeunesse. La scolarité en tous genres est gratuite, l'éducation secondaire universelle et obligatoire. L'éducation est offerte dans tout un ensemble de langues maternelles; l'enseignement est dispensé dans 57 langues (15, 224). Environ 40% de toutes les dépenses d'équipement public sont consacrées à des institutions préscolaires et des écoles pour enfants.

De 3000 à 3500 crèches et jardins d'enfants sont construits chaque année; autant d'écoles le sont aussi. Dès le début de 1979, l'U.R.S.S. comptait 122 000 établissements préscolaires, touchant 13,3 millions d'enfants; il y avait 44,7 millions d'élèves éduqués dans 150 000 écoles. Le tableau 1 illustre l'expansion dynamique de ces institutions de masse en U.R.S.S.

c) Les contrôles gouvernementaux

L'U.R.S.S. utilise un système étatique de réglementation de la construction aux divers paliers de l'organisation politique. Nous appliquons tout un ensemble de normes quantitatives et qualitatives, adaptées au besoin à la grande diversité de nos conditions climatiques, ainsi qu'aux particularités étatiques et régionales. Les normes d'aménagement sont constamment revues et corrigées à la lumière de trois facteurs:

TABLEAU 1

	1940	1965	1970	1975	1978
Nombre d'enfants accueillis dans les établissements préscolaires (en millions)	2.0	7.7	9.3	11.5	13.3
Nombre d'établissements préscolaires (en milliers)	46	92	103	115	122
Nombre d'enfants accueillis dans les établissements préscolaires, par millier d'habitants	10.3	33.1[1]	38.5	45.4	51.2
Nombre d'enfants fréquentant les écoles intégrées (en millions)	35.6	48.3	49.2	47.6	44.7
Nombre d'écoles intégrées (en milliers)	199	214	190	164	150

[1] 1966

Source: (16;7, 33, 233 & 22; 149, 203)

1. La révision périodique des objectifs sociaux et des moyens de les concrétiser;
2. La croissance continue de notre économie;
3. L'application des réalisations scientifiques et techniques qui permettent d'atteindre les objectifs sociaux.

Comme nous arrêtons les normes de conception et de construction d'un bâtiment donné en collaboration avec les organismes étatiques appelés à l'utiliser, nous pouvons dire qu'elles sont isomorphiques et réputées atteindre des objectifs socio-économiques relativement précis, dans des domaines comme l'éducation de l'enfant, la santé publique, la culture, le commerce, et les services et l'entretien de tous les jours.

d) L'organisation de la recherche

Le système de normes et de règles est l'un des principaux fruits de la recherche scientifique. La science appliquée de l'architecture et de la construction est, par sa nature même, anthropocentrique. Elle tire largement parti des conclusions d'autres sciences et nécessite, pour le règlement de bien des problèmes, l'organisation de groupements interdisciplinaires de savants, composés de sociologues, d'hygénistes, de pédagogues et autres spécialistes. En U.R.S.S., cette recherche est menée par le biais de la planification étatique. La recherche scientifique qui convient est prévue dans nos plans quinquennaux de développement socio-économique. Assurer la planification et contrôler l'exécution des plans incombe au Comité d'Etat de la construction et de l'architecture civiles, qui relève du

département de la Construction d'Etat. Le principal organisme chargé de la recherche et de l'aménagement pour l'enfance et la jeunesse est l'Institut central de la recherche et de l'aménagement scientifiques. Il arrête les plans courants et expérimentaux pour les établissements préscolaires, les écoles élémentaires et secondaires, et les établissements d'enseignement supérieur. Il possède des services à Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilissi, Novossibirsk et Tachkent, qui mènent des travaux analogues en fonction des conditions particulières des grandes régions: le nord, le territoire européen du sud, le Caucase, la Sibérie et l'Asie centrale.

La recherche est menée en fonction des programmes de l'institut central et sous sa direction, en collaboration avec l'Académie des sciences pédagogiques, le ministère de la Santé publique (notamment l'Institut de recherche sur l'hygiène de l'enfant et de l'adolescent[1]), les établissements d'enseignement supérieur et autres. Tout un ensemble de méthodes de recherche pertinentes sont employées, mais on se penche dans chaque cas sur la conception, la construction et l'utilisation des bâtiments au pays et à l'étranger. La coopération de nos instituts avec les organismes pertinents d'autres pays, comme les membres du Conseil d'assistance économique mutuelle, assure une aide utile.

Au cours des 15 dernières années, la construction expérimentale de nouveaux types de bâtiments civils et de complexes d'habitation a pris de l'essor en U.R.S.S. A côté des habitations, le plus grand nombre de bâtiments expérimentaux construits sont des jardins d'enfants et des écoles. Ni l'ampleur, ni surtout la cadence de la construction expérimentale ne nous satisfont encore. Nous réalisons qu'il faut revoir constamment nos hypothèses et nos expériences en matière de construction de bâtiments et de complexes afin d'apporter les changements qui peuvent s'imposer, avant d'en ériger les principes en normes et d'en généraliser l'application.

e) Les aménagements standardisés

Les établissements préscolaires, les écoles, les camps de jeunes et autres institutions déjà mentionnées sont construits d'après des plans arrêtés suivant le processus qui vient d'être décrit. L'élaboration de ces plans est financée à même le budget national. L'établissement qui commande un projet ne paie que le prix de sa copie des plans. 96% des jardins d'enfants et 91% des écoles sont construits d'après ces plans. Ces statistiques montrent la grande responsabilité qu'ont les concepteurs dans ce qui se construit pour l'enfant en Union soviétique.

A l'heure actuelle, on dispose de 159 plans de jardins d'enfants et de 309 plans d'écoles et de pensionnats pour la construction en milieu urbain et rural. Ils offrent un large éventail d'aménagements et de matériaux pour les bâtiments de capacité égale conçus pour des conditions identiques, afin d'éviter la monotonie, de donner le choix et de mieux tenir compte des conditions propres à l'endroit. Il existe également des plans d'installations pour les jardins d'enfants et les écoles, y compris des

[1] Voir dans ce numéro l'exposé de G.N. Serdukovskaya, "L'influence du milieu sur la santé de l'enfant".

albums de décoration et d'aménagement intérieurs. Il faut ajouter que des services spéciaux d'Etat étudient les projets terminés pour contrôler le respect des normes et des règles.

III. LES RESEAUX D'INSTITUTIONS

a) La morphologie

En U.R.S.S., nos réseaux d'établissements préscolaires, d'écoles et d'institutions spéciales sont conçus comme un système indivisible pour assurer une éducation et un développement harmonieux à l'enfance et la jeunesse. L'unité de l'objectif social détermine l'intégrité du système, qui repose sur la répartition générale, systématique des institutions au sein des villes en fonction des âges des enfants qu'elles sont appelées à servir. Les institutions les plus importantes sont les écoles (17, 71). Terrains de jeux, jardins d'enfants et écoles sont toujours situés près du domicile des enfants qui vont les utiliser. Comme tous les autres aménagements destinés aux enfants ne peuvent pas être situés à proximité de chaque domicile, des priorités sont établies, en fonction de la répartition statistique des foyers des enfants qui profiteront des divers aménagements (voir tableau 2).

b) Les indices quantitatifs

Les réseaux d'institutions sont prévus, conçus et organisés dans le cadre du processus général d'urbanisme en fonction des indices normatifs suivants:

1. Jardins d'enfants: prévus pour toucher entre 60% et 75% des enfants en âge préscolaire dans une ville ou une localité donnée (et jusqu'à 80% dans les nouvelles villes à cause de la jeunesse de leur population et du taux élevé de leur natalité);
2. Ecoles d'enseignement primaire et secondaire général: prévues pour toucher 100% des élèves éduqués au primaire (classes I à VIII), 75% de ceux qui terminent le secondaire et les 25% restants qui font leurs études secondaires, obligatoires aux termes de la Loi, dans des écoles techniques et spécialisées d'apprentissage et d'autres établissements secondaires spéciaux;
3. Centres et maisons de jeunes: 4 places par millier d'habitants.

c) L'aménagement de l'espace

Les aménagements destinés aux enfants sont situés de façon à être facilement accessibles aux intéressés.

TABLEAU 2

Répartition approximative des établissements ou services pour enfants, à l'exclusion des écoles

	Taille de la ville, en milliers d'habitants				
	30-50	50-100	100-250	250-500	500 et plus
Maison de jeunes et de scolaires	+	+	+	+	+
Centre de jeunes et de scolaires	-	-	(+)	+	+
Centre de jeunes techniciens	-	-	(+)	+	+
Centre de jeunes naturalistes	-	-	(+)	+	+
Ecole de sports pour enfants et jeunes	(+)[1]	+	+	+	+
Centre d'excursion et de tourisme pour enfants	-	-	(+)	+	+
Ecole de musique pour enfants	-	(+)	+	+	+
Ecole d'art pour enfants	-	-	-	+	+
Bibliothèque pour enfants	(+)[2]	(+)	+	+	+
Cinéma pour enfants	-	-	-	(+)	+
Théâtre de marionnettes	-	-	(+)	+	+
Théâtre pour enfants	-	-	-	(+)	+
Stade pour enfants	-	-	-	(+)	+
Parc pour enfants	-	-	(+)	+	+
Piscine pour enfants	-	-	-	(+)	+
Chemin de fer, service fluvial de vapeurs pour enfants	-	-	-	(+)	+

(+) Existence possible de l'établissement ou du service

Remarques: 1 - peut être combiné avec le centre de jeunes et de scolaires

2 - dans les villes comptant jusqu'à 100 000 habitants, la bibliothèque municipale possède un département pour enfants.

Source: (17, 76)

1. Les jardins d'enfants de type courant et les écoles d'enseignement général sont situés dans les zones d'habitation d'une ville délimitée par les grandes rues. L'enfant qui les fréquente n'a donc pas à traverser des rues à forte circulation; ce principe est considéré comme très important en Union soviétique. Nos normes sont les suivantes:

   a) pas plus de 300 m entre le domicile et le jardin d'enfants;
   b) pas plus de 500 m entre le domicile et l'école.

2. Dans les zones de moyennement à densément peuplées, les normes pour les aménagements offrant des activités extrascolaires sont les suivantes:

   a) 1500 m ou pas plus de 20 mn de trajet, pour les installations desservant plusieurs quartiers;
   b) pas plus de 30 mn de trajet par transport public, pour les installations devant desservir toute une ville;
   c) des exceptions sont faites pour les cas spéciaux, comme les jardins d'enfants à la campagne et les camps de jeunes.

d) Les terrains

Les terrains pour les établissements préscolaires et scolaires doivent être suffisamment spacieux, agrémentés d'arbres, et aménagés et équipés pour des activités de diverses sortes. Nos normes pour la taille des terrains sont les suivantes:

   a) pas moins de 35 m^2 par enfant, pour les jardins d'enfants;
   b) de 20 à 24 m^2, pour les écoles.

Les normes pour les terrains de jeux en U.R.S.S. sont les suivantes:

   a) un terrain de jeux de 0,03 hectare pour préscolaires, par millier d'habitants;
   b) 0,04 hectare pour scolaires du primaire;
   c) 0,12 hectare à des fins sportives, pour scolaires et adultes.

Le respect de ces normes est obligatoire et les terrains de jeux doivent être situés directement dans la zone d'habitation.

IV. LA TYPOLOGIE

a) Types de constructions pour les jardins d'enfants et les écoles

A l'heure actuelle, l'établissement préscolaire intégré est accepté comme partie intégrante du milieu urbain. C'est un jardin d'enfants qui s'occupe aussi bien des moins de trois ans que des trois à sept ans. Il s'est avéré que ce genre d'institution aide l'enfant à bien franchir les

diverses phases de son développement. De plus, c'est une solution plus pratique pour enfants et parents, car les préscolaires n'ont pas à changer d'établissement quand ils grandissent. C'est pourquoi on ne construit plus comme avant des crèches et des jardins d'enfants distincts; il en existe toutefois encore un petit nombre dans les villes soviétiques.

Les jardins d'enfants urbains sont généralement conçus pour 140 à 160 enfants (6 à 7 groupes) ou 280 à 320 enfants (12 à 14 groupes). Dans les grosses villes à grands immeubles, un jardin d'enfants qui dessert, suivant la norme, un rayon de 300 m peut se composer de plusieurs bâtiments pour divers groupes d'enfants et d'un bâtiment administratif. Ces complexes peuvent accueillir entre 560 et 640 enfants (24 à 28 groupes), mais ils ne sont pas encore courants.

Les écoles d'enseignement général dans les localités urbaines comportent généralement 30, 40 ou 50 salles de classe, prévues respectivement pour 1176, 1568 ou 1960 élèves. De gros complexes scolaires prévus pour 3500 à 4000 élèves ont été contruits dans bien des villes. Aux Etats-Unis, les normes actuelles permettent de construire des établissements scolaires pouvant accueillir jusqu'à 2400 élèves; au Royaume-Uni, un grand nombre d'écoles d'une capacité de 1350 à 2100 élèves ont été construites et, en France, de nouveaux complexes sont conçus pour 4000. La construction d'importants complexes scolaires va se poursuivre en U.R.S.S.

b) Les grands principes d'aménagement

Les exigences hygiéniques et pédagogiques ont énormément influencé l'aménagement et l'agencement des crèches-jardins d'enfants. Le principal critère est la mesure dans laquelle le milieu physico-spatial cadre avec l'éducation physique, intellectuelle, spirituelle et esthétique préscolaire, compte tenu de l'âge et des particularités de l'enfant.

Les exigences hygiéniques sont le grand principe normatif qui régit l'agencement des crèches-jardins d'enfants et l'aménagement de leurs sites. Il est indispensable de séparer les locaux et terrains de jeux destinés à divers groupes d'âge, tout en maintenant une relation fonctionnelle avec les locaux d'autres groupes et à usage général; chaque groupe d'âge doit également avoir accès aux locaux à usage général sans traverser ceux des autres. La hauteur des bâtiments est limitée à deux étages. D'après une évaluation internationale des installations préscolaires, les normes soviétiques sont les plus exigentes (8; 22).

L'école soviétique est en train d'être aménagée en un centre pédagogique, professionnel et polytechnique. Elle est censée assurer un enseignement secondaire, une préparation polytechnique poussée et une large orientation professionnelle. Elle doit offrir les conditions propices à une instruction dynamique, à un épanouissement général de la personnalité et à un développement des aptitudes cadrant avec les penchants.

L'agencement des bâtiments scolaires est principalement déterminé par les exigences pédagogiques; les différences au niveau des locaux sont dictées par les besoins des divers groupes d'âge: petits, moyens et

grands. L'agencement des locaux pour les petits écoliers est conçu de façon à ce qu'ils disposent de classes, de toilettes et d'un coin récréation séparés, où ne pourront pas venir les autres élèves.

Les écoles urbaines ne peuvent pas comporter plus de 3 étages, bien que des bâtiments à 4 étages soient parfois admis dans des zones d'habitation plus anciennes. Le site scolaire est divisé en zones assignées aux différents groupes d'âge et comprend des installations récréatives, sportives et pédagogiques.

c) L'aménagement intérieur

Les établissements préscolaires comportent deux genres de locaux: ceux réservés aux divers groupes d'âge et ceux à usage général. Pour chacun de ces groupes, une section est aménagée en "quartiers collectifs". Cela comprend:

1. un endroit pour se changer et ranger l'équipement de plein air et autres vêtements;
2. un endroit pour étudier, jouer et prendre les repas;
3. un endroit pour dormir;
4. des toilettes;
5. une cantine annexe.

La recherche sociologique en U.R.S.S. a révélé que la neurasthénie infantile est de 1,5 à 2 fois moindre dans les crèches et jardins d'enfants dont les divers quartiers collectifs comportent des chambres, que dans ceux pourvus d'un dortoir. De nouvelles normes d'aménagement tenant compte de la chose ont été introduites; elles stipulent que les divers quartiers collectifs doivent comporter deux pièces générales.

La superficie par enfant est de 5,7 m^2 pour les crèches et de 5,3 m^2 pour les jardins d'enfants. En général, les établissements préscolaires urbains prévoient une superficie de 6,4 à 7,0 m^2 par enfant. Ces chiffres sont typiques de la zone climatique moyenne et plus élevés dans les contrées septentrionales.

La grande salle où se donnent les cours de musique et de culture physique est destinée à être utilisée à l'une ou l'autre fin par les divers groupes d'âge. Par ailleurs, dans le nord, les crèches-jardins d'enfants sont dotés d'une piscine, d'une deuxième grande salle et de vérandas intérieures non chauffées où l'on peut se promener par mauvais temps.

En U.R.S.S., on a adopté un système de "classes spécialisées": de la 1ère à la 4e année, les cours sont donnés dans des salles de classe fixes, tandis que de la 5e à la 10e année chaque discipline est enseignée dans une salle, un laboratoire ou un atelier particulier; les élèves passent d'une classe à l'autre. Toutes les écoles ont des salles de réunion qui servent également pour les projections cinématographiques et les conférences, des cantines où se préparent les repas pour toute l'école, un ou deux gymnases, une bibliothèque, des services audio-visuels et des locaux pour les activités sociales.

Bâtiments et sites d'école sont utilisés pour des activités extrascolaires, notamment par des associations sportives et autres groupes d'intérêt spéciaux. En outre, chaque école a un système d'"internat": les élèves - surtout les petits - restent à l'école après les heures de classe si les parents le désirent: ils font leurs devoirs sous la surveillance de professeurs, se reposent, jouent à l'intérieur ou l'extérieur, participent à des excursions.

En général, on prévoit dans l'aménagement des diverses sortes d'écoles urbaines entre 3,7 et 3,9 m^2 de superficie par élève, sans compter les couloirs et les locaux techniques. Ce chiffre est plus élevé dans les régions septentrionales, moindre dans les régions méridionales.

Il existe en U.R.S.S. un assez grand nombre d'écoles pourvues d'une piscine, bien que cet élément n'ait fait son apparition dans les normes de construction qu'en 1974; c'est en effet cette année-là qu'ont été introduites de nouvelles normes prévoyant la construction d'une piscine appelée à desservir un ensemble d'écoles.

d) L'aspect hygiène

Les installations nécessaires au bien-être de l'enfant sont aménagées à la lumière des recherches effectuées par les hygiénistes. Il est normal que l'on prête le plus soin à l'aménagement des crèches-jardins d'enfants, car les préscolaires sont vulnérables à bien des égards. Les normes prévoient par exemple un large recours à l'éclairage naturel, une stricte orientation géographique, une bonne ventilation naturelle (sauf dans le nord) et différentes températures pour les locaux; elles prévoient notamment des dispositions détaillées en ce qui concerne la superficie et ses caractéristiques (les sols sont parfois chauffés), les solutions d'aménagement intérieur qui minimisent les risques d'accidents et les matériaux de finition qui facilitent le nettoyage. Le service de l'inspecteur national en chef de l'hygiène décide si certains matériaux synthétiques peuvent être employés dans la construction des établissements pour enfants, bannissant parfois leur usage ou l'autorisant de manière restreinte à la suite de tests.

V. L'ARRANGEMENT ARCHITECTURAL DANS LES BATIMENTS POUR ENFANTS

a) L'importance de l'environnement

Dire que le milieu influe sur nous et notre état d'esprit serait une vérité de La Palisse. Le fait est, cependant, que l'architecture a non seulement un but technologique, mais aussi un rôle psychologique. Sans vouloir sous-estimer la place importante qu'occupe l'aménagement dans la vie affective et intellectuelle de chacun d'entre nous, il faut souligner l'importance particulière qu'il revêt pour l'enfant et l'adolescent, vu qu'ils passent beaucoup de temps dans le cadre d'institutions et, surtout, que celles-ci constituent le milieu physique et spirituel où ils grandissent.

Sechenov, le célèbre psychologue russe, a dit: "La dépendance du contenu psychique à l'égard du milieu n'est nulle part aussi prononcée

que chez l'enfant, où elle dure des années" (14; 258, 412). K. Koffka (9; 35) a souligné que le milieu peut susciter, activer ou ralentir le développement de l'enfant.

Aux yeux des experts soviétiques, même si Freud et ses disciples ont surestimé l'importance des chocs nerveux dans la tendre enfance en y voyant l'unique motif des neuroses à l'âge adulte, il n'en reste pas moins que bien des symptômes pathologiques chez l'adulte peuvent s'expliquer par un manque d'égard pour le système nerveux de l'enfant.

En conséquence, il ne faudrait pas négliger des dispositions comme prévoir des chambres confortables spéciales pour tous les groupes d'âge, éviter les perturbations et surcharges visuelles dans le champ de perception de l'enfant, prévoir suffisamment d'espace pour les activités motrices, faire un usage judicieux de la couleur du point de vue psycho-physiologique, et permettre à l'enfant de participer à des jeux et des études collectives et de s'isoler.

b) Un problème

Comme l'enfant diffère en principe de l'adulte sur le plan psycho-physiologique et neuro-psychique, il faut cerner ses particularités pour tenter d'établir un lien entre celles-ci et les règles régissant l'aménagement de l'espace dans son intérêt. Optimiser le milieu physique de l'enfant, créé en premier lieu par des moyens architecturaux, en tenant compte des différences d'aptitudes entre enfants de divers âges, peut être la façon d'instaurer les conditions les plus propices à l'instruction. Pour ce faire, la difficulté ne provient pas de l'insuffisance, mais de l'abondance et de la diversité des recherches effectuées, et surtout du problème quasi insurmontable que pose l'interprétation judicieuse des connaissances amassées dans d'autres sciences pour les besoins de l'architecture appliquée.

c) Les particularités perceptuelles

Les exigences les plus générales auxquelles doit répondre l'aménagement des bâtiments pour enfants, d'après les études effectuées sur les particularités psycho-physiologiques, neuro-psychiques et perceptuelles de l'enfant, découlent des principes suivants:

1. La simplicité en toutes choses: l'univers de l'enfant ne doit pas être comme un kaléidoscope (19; 49) car, s'ils sont saturés, ses goûts et ses intérêts - les principaux moteurs du développement - s'émoussent. C'est une règle courante de culture visuelle pour l'enfant.

2. La forme doit être simple, claire, précise. L'enfant n'a pas encore une expérience socialement conditionnée; ses modèles sensoriels de formes géométriques ne sont pas encore formés. Comme l'ont démontré les expériences, il ne perçoit pas les écarts par rapport aux formes les plus simples, considérant subconsciemment l'"irrégularité" de la forme comme une forme simple et stable, qui lui est familière (11; 113 et 3; 166).

3. La configuration: l'enfant de 3 à 4 ans ne perçoit pas la configuration comme une information nécessaire.

4. La couleur, quand elle sert à des fins d'information, doit être solide, le fond des détails colorés de préférence apochromatique. Il faut éviter les contrastes de couleur et de lumière pour des périodes prolongées, car la vue de l'enfant se fatigue rapidement.

   Les études sur les changements survenant avec l'âge dans la perception visuelle des divers aspects des objets (couleur, forme, emplacement, taille, proportions) ont montré que les quatre à six ans sont principalement influencés par la couleur, les sept à neuf ans par la forme, et les vingt ans par les proportions. Chez l'adulte, la couleur est un élément perceptuel qui a moins d'importance (4; 14).

   L'enfant commence à distinguer les couleurs à l'âge de trois mois environ (5; 118 et autres). Son évolution suit le cours général suivant: tout d'abord, la lumière et les couleurs chaudes; par la suite, le noir et les couleurs froides; puis, la distinction des tons verts et bleus-violets (3; 167).

   Il y a un certain temps, une théorie très en vogue a voulu que l'on utilise dans les écoles des tons physiologiquement optimaux - en pratique, diverses teintes de verts. La recherche a montré que non la gamme proprement dite des couleurs, mais le ton de leur mélange imaginé dans le champ de vision sensoriel devrait former la soi-disante zone de couleurs physiologiquement optimale (13; 15).

5. L'échelle de l'enfant ne coïncide pas avec celle de l'adulte. D'après Wallon, l'enfant attribue une taille plus importante à tous les objets, en se comparant constamment avec tout ce qui l'entoure. Il s'intéresse aux très gros objets et encore plus aux très petits (3; 171-172 et 2; 221-222).

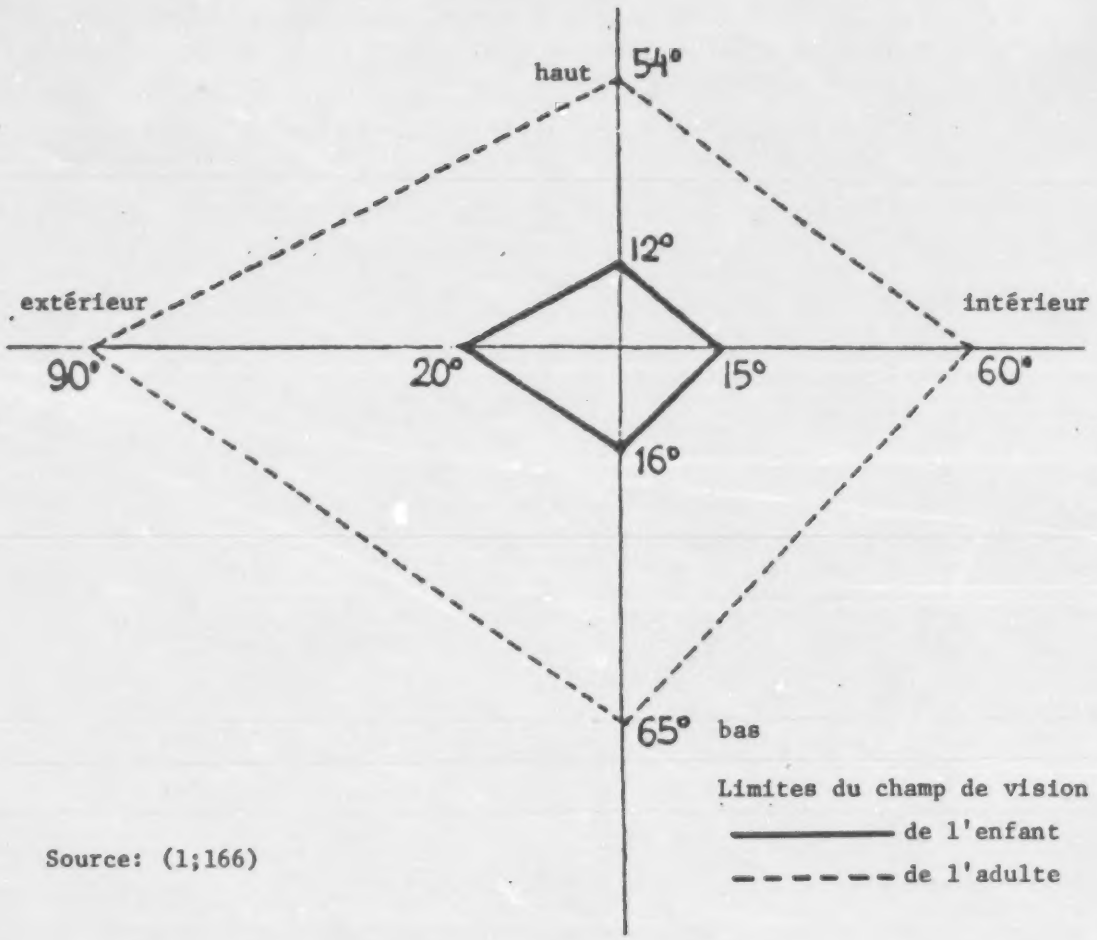
6. Le champ de vision est beaucoup plus petit chez l'enfant; par exemple dix fois moindre chez celui de six ans (voir illustration 1). C'est pourquoi la structure des sols et des bâtiments, et la proportion des objets destinés à être utilisés par des préscolaires, doivent être en principe les plus petits possible. L'enfant a également une moins bonne vue. A partir de l'âge de 4 ans, elle s'améliore plus de deux fois au cours des trois prochaines années et devient typique de l'adulte à l'âge de sept ans (1; 206).

7. Les proportions doivent être contrastées et précisément définies. La vue linéaire de l'enfant est de 5 à 7 fois moins perçante que celle de l'adulte (1; 242); il ne perçoit donc pas les différences subtiles.

8. Il est très important que le cadre de vie soit variable et mobile. L'enfant affectionne énormément le changement. Les meubles intégrés transformables et les cloisons amovibles donnent un sentiment de nouveauté et un tas d'impressions nouvelles. A partir de l'âge de

Illustration 1

Profil du champ de vision moyen
chez l'enfant de 6,0 à 6,4 ans et chez l'adulte



Source: (1;166)

4 ans, l'enfant s'adonne à des jeux de construction. Gropius, le fondateur de l'école d'aménagement Bauhaus, a écrit: "Nous devons encourager les enfants dans les jardins d'enfants à refaçonner leur milieu au travers de jeux créatifs ..." (24; 8). Le mobilier et l'équipement des installations pour enfants ont beaucoup d'importance à cet égard.

d) L'interprétation au moyen de l'architecture

Ces principes et d'autres plus généraux ont inspiré l'aménagement recommandé pour les crèches-jardins d'enfants en U.R.S.S. (7).

Un principe important pour que les bâtiments conviennent aux enfants, notamment les plus jeunes, est la création d'une bonne relation visuelle avec le milieu naturel, surtout dans les localités urbaines. La chose s'impose pour deux raisons.

1. Pour que sa vue se développe normalement, l'enfant a besoin d'observer des objets à courte et à longue distance de façon à l'entraîner à converger et diverger. Lorsque des ensembles ou des parties de bâtiments sont agencés en parallèle et peu espacés, ils ne permettent pas de focaliser "à l'infini", notamment au rez-de-chaussée (voir illustration 2). Il faut également tenir compte du fait que le champ de vision de l'enfant est moindre que celui de l'adulte (voir illustration 1).

2. La seconde raison est l'importance de la présence du milieu naturel à l'intérieur des installations pour enfants.

L'une des caractéristiques déterminantes, souvent vantées, de l'architecture moderne est son interaction avec la nature. La nature - couchers de soleil, nuages, pluie, fleurs, oiseaux - représente pour l'enfant (et l'homme en général) un élément instructif, fonctionnel plus qu'affectif, et est utilisée comme telle par les pédagogues dans le processus d'éducation.

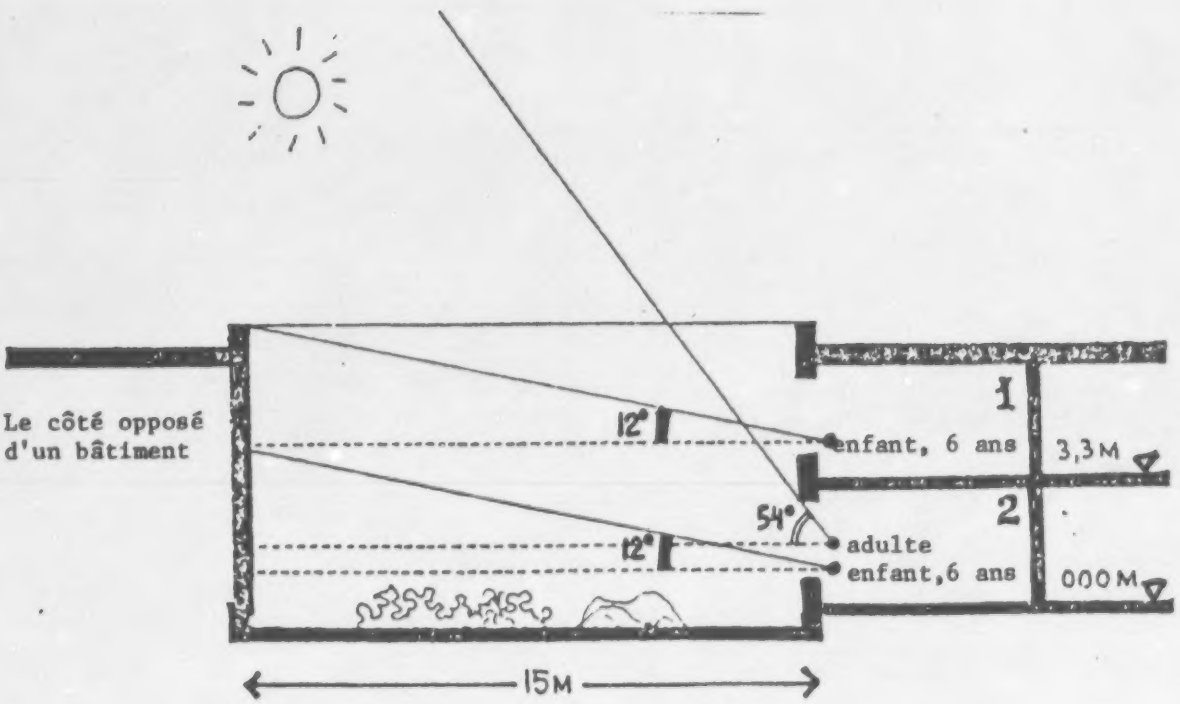
Tiheeva, un des fondateurs de la pédagogie préscolaire soviétique, se prononce comme suit sur cette question: "La nature, dans toute sa variété, représente pour l'enfant un milieu des plus puissants et naturels ... son infinie diversité n'est pas dangereuse au sens pédagogique" (20; 3-4).

Dans les établissements préscolaires, le meilleur moyen de satisfaire ce besoin est d'avoir des groupes de bâtiments avec des vitres au coin et face à face, souvent des fenêtres s'ouvrant à différents niveaux, permettant d'apercevoir le paysage et d'avoir une vue dégagée de l'horizon. Ces recommandations valent aussi pour les jeunes scolaires.

Les intérieurs de certains locaux sont des éléments d'aménagement général formant un tout, car ils sont unis par une dépendance non seulement fonctionnelle, mais aussi affective, perçue à travers le temps. Dans les crèches-jardins d'enfants, la mobilité est orientée principalement vers

Illustration 2

Champ de vision chez l'enfant et l'adulte



Les fenêtres orientées vers le côté non obstrué de l'horizon devraient être visibles des points 1 & 2

l'extérieur, au travers de contacts constants et durables avec le site, car le programme pédagogique ne prévoit pas moins de deux sorties, y compris parfois des jeux en plein air, chaque jour. Dans les écoles, la mobilité se situe principalement au niveau du bâtiment, c'est-à-dire que la circulation se fait entre les diverses parties.

Le lien spatial optimal entre le milieu et les crèches-jardins d'enfants se présente comme suit: locaux intérieurs pour un certain groupe d'âge - préaus - terrain de jeux pour ce groupe d'âge - nature (site). Une telle solution, en plus d'être fonctionnellement pratique, permet de passer graduellement de l'intérieur au grand air par un espace semi-ouvert. E. Cornell a appelé le phénomène du passage "de-à" le "drame de l'architecture" (23; 6).

Bien des plans d'aménagement normalisés qui ont été arrêtés récemment, et à l'élaboration desquels l'auteur a participé, assurent un lien organique structurel entre le bâtiment et le site, en situant le préau et le terrain de jeux près du bâtiment et en s'inspirant de certains des principes susmentionnés.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

La législation soviétique définit les orientations sociales et techniques dans le domaine de la planification, de la conception et de la construction des installations, y compris celles destinées aux enfants et aux adolescents. La recherche et le développement organisés par l'Etat dans le domaine de la normalisation des plans pour les bâtiments les plus courants permettent d'exploiter sur une grande échelle les réalisations scientifiques et techniques enregistrées dans tous les secteurs.

Il y a tout lieu d'estimer que les méthodes adoptées en U.R.S.S. sont des moyens fiables d'aménager, de réglementer et de régulariser le milieu urbain. L'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant ne saurait se faire sans la participation d'architectes, d'ingénieurs, de constructeurs, de savants, de concepteurs et d'organisateurs. Il est indispensable d'y associer ces spécialistes, quoique la liste ne s'arrête pas là.

Les méthodes exposées ici sont efficaces, non isolément, mais dans le contexte politique et socio-économique général de l'U.R.S.S. où, d'après Romain Rolland, les enfants sont la seule classe privilégiée. Les préoccupations pour l'enfant se traduisent au niveau de l'Etat par l'équipement et le financement de réseaux d'institutions au service de la mère et de l'enfant. Ces débours sont sanctionnés par le Soviet suprême de l'U.R.S.S. Il est également clair que la propriété étatique, constitutionnalisée, de la terre empêche les abus dont pourraient être victimes les enfants et les adolescents.

Les problèmes complexes de la vie moderne ont fait porter un vif intérêt à la recherche interdisciplinaire. Un tel effort est une condition indispensable, sans être un moyen sûr, pour aboutir à des solutions. Il faut mettre davantage en pratique l'enseignement de la recherche. Aucun

chercheur n'a encore défini le milieu urbain optimal pour l'enfant. On peut néanmoins cerner les objectifs qui s'imposent. Ils consistent notamment à:

1. atténuer l'incidence et le risque de maladies infantiles; faire régresser la mortalité infantile;
2. allonger la durée de la vie;
3. améliorer l'enseignement général et la formation professionnelle dans la population; améliorer la qualité de l'éducation;
4. favoriser le développement physique, culturel et intellectuel de l'individu.

Il y a une étroite corrélation entre les réalisations de notre pays en matière de développement socio-économique et l'aménagement et le réaménagement intensifs de nos villes, la construction massive de divers types d'établissements pour enfants et l'attention que nous prodiguons aux jeunes.

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LES AIRES DE JEUX POUR ENFANTS DANS LE MILIEU D'HABITATION: LEGISLATIONS ET LIGNES DIRECTRICES

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INTRODUCTION

Les conférences sur les établissements humains, les autorités régionales et les mésologues se sont intéressés de près au problème de la vivabilité du milieu physique. A travers le monde entier, on prend mieux conscience de la place à faire au besoin de jouer de l'enfant au niveau de l'habitat, dans la mesure où l'on réalise que la possibilité de jouer pour celui-ci est inextricablement liée à la vivabilité du milieu. Dans cet exposé, je traiterai de l'influence des législations et des lignes directrices sur l'aménagement des aires de jeux pour enfants dans le milieu d'habitation.

Tous les enfants grandissent dans un habitat aménagé par des adultes pour des adultes. Ils sont donc les victimes de conditions de vie qui sont imposées par d'autres au sein du milieu physique, et sur lesquelles ils ont rarement prise. Ils sont alors appelés à grandir et se développer dans un cadre qui n'est pas fait pour eux. Ainsi, un enfant des faubourgs vit dans un milieu soumis à des conditions bien définies; par contre, l'enfant urbain se trouve confronté à un cadre physique et un ensemble de conditions radicalement différents. L'habitat physique et les activités favorisées par le milieu forment le contexte du développement de tout enfant.

Il est difficile de déterminer l'importance du milieu physique pour le développement de l'enfant. Les conditions économiques, sociales et pédagogiques ont indiscutablement une influence plus importante sur ce plan. Cependant, dans la mesure où l'enfant est le principal usager des espaces en plein air et donc particulièrement vulnérable aux conditions du milieu physique, l'ensemble de son comportement est influencé par la qualité dudit milieu.

L'IMPORTANCE DU JEU

A toutes les époques et indépendamment de sa condition socio-économique, l'enfant a manifesté le besoin de jouer et démontré l'importance du jeu dans son développement global. La mesure dans laquelle la société lui a permis ou l'a empêché de le faire en dit long sur ses attentes et l'importance qu'elle accorde au jeu. La question n'est plus maintenant controversée; pédagogues, psychologues, parents et, souvent, urbanistes reconnaissent

la contribution vitale du jeu au développement social, affectif, intellectuel et physique de l'enfant.

Le milieu physique diffère, suivant que l'enfant habite en ville, dans les faubourgs ou à la campagne. La question de savoir lequel de ces milieux fait partir l'enfant du meilleur pied dans la vie est discutable, dans la mesure où elle tient à d'innombrables variables. Le fait est que l'enfant a rarement son mot à dire dans le choix de l'endroit. Bien que la vie à la campagne offre la possibilité de communier avec la nature, de découvrir le monde animal et de manipuler en toute liberté le milieu, les enfants qui peuvent de nos jours vivre dans un tel contexte sont de plus en plus rares. Le milieu rural offre des avantages qui n'ont plus de secret; néanmoins, il perd beaucoup de ses aspects idylliques avec l'isolement social. Il n'en reste pas moins très propice au jeu. Bien des gens ont préconisé d'ailleurs de donner à tous les enfants, y compris des villes, accès à l'ensemble des éléments naturels que l'on trouve à la campagne. Toutefois, ce ne sont pas des éléments comme la lumière, l'ombre, le sable, l'espace libre et l'herbe qui font en eux-mêmes un excellent cadre de jeu.

L'AMENAGEMENT A L'INTENTION DE L'ENFANT

L'aménagement du milieu physique à l'intention de l'enfant en est presque toujours arrivé à signifier l'organisation de terrains de jeux. L'aménagement de terrains de jeux est certes indispensable, mais il ne faudrait pas partir du principe que l'enfant ne joue que sur des aires équipées de balançoires, de glissières, d'échafaudages et de fosses de sable. Il joue partout dans son milieu d'habitation. Il s'agit d'en tenir compte quand on prévoit les possibilités de jeux et de se faire à l'idée que les terrains soigneusement aménagés répondent aux désirs des grandes personnes, mais pas vraiment aux besoins des enfants. Il est rare que l'on trouve des espaces libres ou récréatifs convenant à la fois aux adultes et aux enfants. Les grandes personnes, toutefois, peuvent faire comprendre leurs besoins; les enfants, eux, ne le peuvent pas.

Il est devenu indispensable d'arrêter une législation et des lignes directrices pour assurer des aires et des possibilités de jeux dans le milieu d'habitation, dès lors que le besoin de terrains et le réaménagement de zones urbaines compliquent davantage l'attribution d'espaces et d'installations aux enfants. Il s'agit d'adopter aux niveaux national, régional et municipal une législation qui énonce clairement les droits juridiques des enfants au sein du cadre de vie. On met en cause ces droits de l'enfance quand on arrête des normes pour l'attribution de l'espace. Ces normes ne constituent en aucun cas un idéal car, en tant que moyens de réglementation, elles servent principalement à fixer un minimum acceptable. En fait, elles ne peuvent tout au plus qu'imposer l'affectation d'espaces à diverses activités récréatives.

La transformation de l'espace en une aire de jeux fonctionnelle, où l'enfant peut utiliser tout un ensemble de moyens souples - des blocs, des planches, des marteaux, des scies et des outils de jardinier - et jouer avec des animaux, pose d'autres problèmes. En réalité, il faut revoir

radicalement l'attention que l'on porte et la priorité que l'on donne à l'enfant dans la société. La chose peut se faire au travers de l'élaboration et de l'application de lignes directrices par les ministères du logement, les organismes de services sociaux et les institutions récréatives et pédagogiques. Les lignes directrices socio-récréatives doivent mettre l'accent sur les besoins de l'enfant de façon à corriger la négligence flagrante dont ils ont fait l'objet dans le passé au niveau de l'aménagement. Cet accent n'empêche pas de partir du principe que les cadres d'habitation nouvellement aménagés, ou réaménagés, doivent comprendre tout un éventail d'installations sociales, récréatives et pédagogiques, répondant aux besoins des divers groupes d'âge.

Bien des études n'insistent pas suffisamment sur le fait que le plan d'aménagement a une influence importante sur le comportement individuel ou l'action sociale collective. Il n'en reste pas moins vrai que la satisfaction des résidents dépend de l'idée qu'ils se font de l'aptitude du milieu à répondre à leurs besoins. Il est donc parfaitement normal que des espaces libres soient prévus; toutefois, ils doivent être situés et aménagés de façon à pouvoir être pleinement utilisés comme aires de jeux et de loisirs.

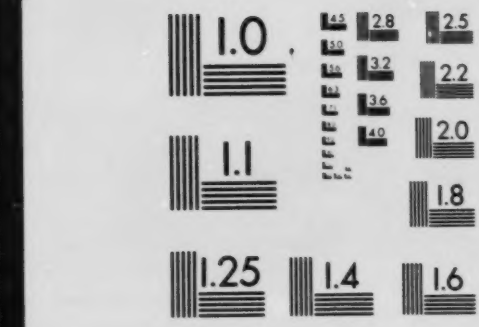
Le processus d'urbanisation est en train de manger rapidement les espaces naturels où les précédentes générations d'enfants recherchaient l'amusement, la liberté et l'aventure. Le grave amenuisement des possibilités de jeu pour les enfants qui habitent dans des zones à forte densité de population fait ressortir la nécessité d'adopter une législation qui consacre le droit de jouer de l'enfant. Mais, même si l'urbanisation rend indispensable une législation convenable sur les aires de jeux, cette dernière ne doit pas être axée uniquement sur les zones urbaines à forte densité. Les enfants ont les mêmes droits quel que soit leur milieu d'habitation, et la législation adoptée doit permettre l'organisation de possibilités de jeux convenables pour les enfants et les familles vivant dans diverses conditions. Il faut une législation de base pour préserver les droits de l'enfant, même si elle est plus ou moins nécessaire suivant les pays.

QUELQUES EXEMPLES A TRAVERS LE MONDE

Les législations traduisent la conception que les sociétés se font de l'enfant et l'importance qu'elles lui accordent. Le fait que certains pays soient plus enclins que d'autres à prendre parti pour l'enfant et à accorder de l'importance au jeu sert à expliquer les démarches différentes que l'on relève quand on compare les législations de la Suède, du Danemark et du Canada.

LA SUEDE

Les Normes suédoises de construction ("Svenska Byggenorm"), adoptées en 1975 et entrées en vigueur en 1976, stipulent que l'enfant doit avoir les mêmes possibilités de jeux quelle que soit la densité du milieu d'habitation. En fait, dans les zones d'habitation multifamiliale, le constructeur est tenu de prévoir tout un ensemble d'aires où les enfants puissent



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

jouer, y compris des espaces pour les petits à proximité des logements. Dans le cas des maisons individuelles, les autorités municipales et le constructeur peuvent conclure un contrat obligeant les propriétaires à former une coopérative appelée à aménager et à entretenir une aire de jeux communautaire pour les jeunes enfants. En plus de ces aires de jeux situées à proximité des habitations, il doit y avoir des terrains de jeux aménagés et entretenus par la municipalité ("park lekplatser"), qui ne sont pas régis par la réglementation susmentionnée. Ces indications générales donnent une certaine idée de l'attention portée à l'aménagement des aires de jeux pour enfants en Suède.

LE DANEMARK

L'essentiel de la législation concernant les aires de jeux et de loisirs au Danemark se trouve renfermé dans la version 1977 des Normes et Règlements de construction ("Bygningsreglement"); cette réglementation s'applique à toutes les régions du Danemark autres que les Iles Féroé et le Groenland.

Les exigences concernant les aires de jeux pour enfants sont clairement énumérées point par point dans la réglementation sur l'aménagement de l'espace libre en relation avec les complexes d'habitation. Les normes stipulent que dans le cas d'un projet de construction prévu pour plus de huit familles, une partie de l'espace libre doit être aménagée en aire de jeux pour enfants. Cela vaut également, autant que possible, pour les complexes existants. L'espace est attribué à raison de 20 m^2 par logement. La Loi oblige maintenant de prévoir des aires de jeux convenables pour les préscolaires et les enfants plus âgés, ainsi que des installations communautaires davantage élaborées (voir tableau 1). L'aménagement de ces espaces de jeux doit inclure la plantation de végétation, un aménagement paysager varié, la fourniture d'équipements et l'installation de clôtures; il faut également tenir compte de l'accessibilité, de la circulation et des variables climatiques.

La société danoise voit d'un très bon oeil la législation, qui est en vigueur depuis 1972. A mon avis, au Canada, nous devrions prendre la réglementation danoise comme point de repère pour comparer les normes arrêtées à propos des aires de jeux dans un pays où l'espace disponible est beaucoup plus important. Est-ce présomptueux de penser que dans un pays qui offre une plus grande superficie par habitant, l'enfant disposera nécessairement de davantage d'espace pour jouer?

LE CANADA

Au Canada, 55% de toutes les nouvelles habitations construites depuis 1961 ont été financées par le biais de la Loi nationale sur l'habitation (L.N.H.), appliquée par la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (S.C.H.L., anciennement la Société centrale d'hypothèques et de logement), une société fédérale de la Couronne. Les normes que prévoie la L.N.H. aux fins de l'aménagement des aires de jeux pour enfants dans les complexes

TABLEAU 1

ESPACES LIBRES A AFFECTER POUR LES JEUX AU DANEMARK

Espace affecté pour le jeu à l'enfant en fonction des conditions A et B.

A. 8 logements ou plus - 20 m^2/logement

B. 40 logements ou plus - 35 m^2/logement

1. Espace de jeu total pour l'enfant = $35m^2$ x (n. de logements)
   Espace de jeu pour préscolaires = $10m^2$ x (n. de logements)
   Espace de jeu pour divers âges = $10m^2$ x (n. de logements)
   Espace de jeu communautaire = $15m^2$ x (n. de logements)

2. Pour chaque groupe de 30 logements, au moins 200 m^2 d'espace de jeu doit être réservé aux préscolaires.

3. Pour chaque groupe de 60 logements, au moins 600 m^2 d'espace de jeu doit être réservé aux enfants de divers âges.

4. Pour chaque groupe de 120 logements, au moins 1200 m^2 d'espace de jeu doit être réservé à la communauté.

5. Un complexe de 120 logements doit avoir:

   a) Quatre aires de jeux pour préscolaires, d'au moins 200 m^2 chacune

   b) Deux aires de jeux pour enfants de divers âges, d'au moins 600 m^2 chacune

   c) Une aire de jeux communautaire, d'au moins 1200 m^2

6. L'espace total expressément réservé aux enfants pour les jeux et les loisirs dans un complexe de 120 logements est de 3200 m^2.

   a) 4 x $200m^2$ = $800m^2$

   b) 2 x $600m^2$ = $1200m^2$

   c) 1 x$1200m^2$ = $1200m^2$

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d'habitations ne s'appliquent qu'aux nouvelles habitations financées par le biais de cette loi; néanmoins, les autorités municipales ou provinciales s'en inspirent souvent pour arrêter des normes semblables ou plus strictes. Les critères actuels de la L.N.H. en ce qui concerne l'aménagement des aires de jeux pour enfants sont énoncés dans les Critères d'urbanisme, publiés par la S.C.H.L.:

> Dans un projet d'ensemble planifié de plus de 20 logements familiaux (deux chambres à coucher ou plus) bien situés, il faut prévoir des terrains de jeux bien aménagés pour les enfants d'âge préscolaire et d'âge scolaire. A cette fin, on calcule un minimum de 2,5 m^2 par chambre à coucher (sauf la chambre des maîtres). Les terrains de jeux font partie de l'aire d'agrément minimal.

La norme revient à prévoir 5 m^2 d'espace de jeu par logement pour les enfants en âge préscolaire et scolaire dans les complexes de logements à trois chambres. Le tableau 2 compare les effets des législations canadienne et danoise sur les aires de jeux pour enfants dans le cas de complexes de divers types.

Les normes de la L.N.H. appliquées par la S.C.H.L. ne prévoient pas de critères pour les aires de jeux communautaires; au Canada, ce sont les municipalités ou les provinces qui fixent les exigences en la matière. Il est à noter toutefois que l'impératif fait de "l'aire d'agrément minimal" par les Critères d'urbanisme de la L.N.H. est suffisant pour imposer l'aménagement d'aires de jeux pour enfants en âge préscolaire et scolaire, de même que communautaires, dans le milieu d'habitation.

On peut fournir par le biais de lignes directrices des indications précises sur l'agencement, la conception, la construction, l'aménagement paysager et l'équipement de certaines aires de jeux. Au Canada, on procède par ce biais pour éclairer les aménageurs, les urbanistes et le grand public sur les problèmes précis de conception, d'agencement et d'aménagement paysager des aires de jeux. La S.C.H.L. a ainsi récemment publié une directive de ce genre intitulée Aires de jeu pour enfants préscolaires (1978), suivie d'une autre intitulée Aménagements récréatifs pour enfants d'âge scolaire (1979). Ces lignes directrices vont aider l'industrie canadienne du logement à appliquer les normes de la Loi nationale sur l'habitation qui régissent les aires de jeux pour enfants.

CONCLUSIONS

La législation sur les aires de jeux peut fournir des indications détaillées sur la taille, l'emplacement et l'accessibilité des installations, comme dans le cas du Danemark, ou bien des renseignements généraux sur l'espace requis, comme dans celui du Canada.

Les législations et lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux pour enfants adoptées en Suède, au Danemark et au Canada, même si elles sont

TABLEAU 2

DANEMARK			CANADA	
Calculs sur la base de: 1. 20 m^2/logement pour les complexes de moins de 40 logements 2. 35 m^2/logement pour les complexes de 40 logements et plus			Calculs sur la base de complexes de logements à trois chambres: 2,5 m^2/chambre (autre que la chambre parentale) 2,5 m^2 x 2 = 5 m^2	
N. DE LOGEMENTS	ESPACE TOTAL	ESPACE AFFECTE	ESPACE TOTAL	ESPACE AFFECTE
20	400 m^2	A. 200 m^2 B. 200 m^2 C. N/A	100 m^2	A. 40 m^2 B. 60 m^2 C. N/A
40	1400 m^2	A. 400 m^2 B. 400 m^2 C. 600 m^2	200 m^2	A. 80 m^2 B. 120 m^2 C. N/A
120	4200 m^2	A. 1200 m^2 B. 1200 m^2 C. 1800 m^2	600 m^2	A. 240 m^2 B. 360 m^2 C. N/A
240	8400 m^2	A. 2400 m^2 B. 2400 m^2 C. 1800 m^2	1200 m^2	A. 480 m^2 B. 720 m^2 C. N/A
A. Préscolaires B. Ages divers C. Communauté			A. Préscolaires B. Scolaires C. Pas d'équivalent disponible	

Dans ses lignes directrices sur les Aires de jeu pour enfants préscolaires, la S.C.H.L. recommande que sur les 2,5 m^2/chambre:

1 m^2/chambre soit réservé aux A et

1,5 m^2/chambre soit réservé aux B

(c'est-à-dire, 2 m^2/logement à trois chambres pour les A et 3 m^2/logement à trois chambres pour les B).

loin d'être parfaites, n'en représentent pas moins l'amorce d'une réglementation nationale visant à protéger le droit au jeu de l'enfance. Les Danois sont plus habitués à cette approche que leurs homologues et, au Danemark, bien des animateurs et des professeurs de jeux s'occupent de donner des conseils sur la façon d'améliorer la conception, l'agencement et la construction d'aires de jeux pour enfants au sein du milieu d'habitation. Dans la mesure où la densité d'habitation s'accroît, l'urbanisation mange les refuges naturels à la disposition des habitants. Il est donc essentiel pour la préservation et la protection du bien-être des futures générations que l'on arrête des législations et des lignes directrices judicieuses au profit de l'enfant, à l'échelon national, régional et municipal; grâce à quoi, les futures générations disposeront d'un espace suffisant, bien situé, agencé et aménagé, pour satisfaire leur besoin de jouer.

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L'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN DANS L'INTERET DE L'ENFANT EN FINLANDE

par Camilla Rosengren

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Pendant longtemps, la Finlande a connu une urbanisation bien plus lente que les autres pays de l'Europe septentrionale. Elle compte d'ailleurs encore beaucoup de petites villes paisibles, faites principalement de maisons de bois. Il y a trente ou quarante ans, dans ces localités, les enfants pouvaient regarder les grandes personnes au travail, se déplacer librement et trouver des endroits passionnants où jouer, même s'il n'y avait rien ou presque d'expressément prévu pour eux. Aujourd'hui, la vie a changé, même dans ces communautés: les gens doivent se déplacer pour aller au travail, les cours sont encombrées de voitures et la circulation constitue partout un danger pour les jeunes enfants.

Nous avons maintenant du mal à faire, même de vieux quartiers de petite envergure, des endroits où il fait bon vivre et grandir pour l'enfant. Les choses se compliquent naturellement bien plus avec les zones à grands immeubles, qui proliférèrent au cours des années soixante et au début des années soixante-dix. Dans le domaine du logement, de bonnes réalisations architecturales virent le jour au cours de ce siècle, mais aucun règlement ou aucune norme d'aménagement ne vint remédier aux problèmes grandissants posés par la circulation routière, les cours poussiéreuses et la destruction du milieu naturel, sans parler de l'isolement et des perturbations sociales qui s'ensuivirent.

Au cours des années soixante, on prit conscience qu'il fallait faire quelque chose. Les lois de la construction ne renfermaient alors aucune disposition précises en vue de l'aménagement d'un milieu sûr et stimulant pour l'enfance, et l'on vit naître des conditions vraiment hostiles dans des villes de tout le pays. Municipalités, organismes d'assistance sociale et urbanistes réagirent alors en organisant toutes sortes de programmes pour enfants, des colloques d'aménageurs, de professeurs et de décisionnaires, et même quelques expériences avec des terrains de jeux d'aventure. Ces initiatives restèrent toutefois trop marginales et ne se soldèrent que par la prolifération sur le marché d'équipements tout prêts en tous genres.

Au début de la décennie, plusieurs rapports de comités pertinents furent publiés. Ils portèrent sur l'école intégrée (1970, 1971), les garderies (1971), les enfants en âge préscolaire (1972) et les aires récréatives (1973). En 1974, le ministère de l'Intérieur a sorti des "Instructions pour l'aménagement des terrains de jeux pour enfants". Les recommandations s'inspirent en partie des conclusions de récents rapports danois, norvégiens et suédois, en les adaptant à la situation finlandaise. Elles

portent notamment sur les différents types de terrains de jeux et d'espaces libres suivants:

1. Petits terrains de jeux
2. Parcs de quartier
3. Principales aires récréatives
4. Espaces libres environnant les bâtiments officiels
5. Installations sportives spéciales

Parmi ceux-ci, les trois premiers peuvent faire l'objet de normes générales. On a arrêté les suivantes:

1. Petits terrains de jeux: Dans un rayon de 50 m à partir de l'entrée principale de chaque logement, on devrait prévoir un espace où jouer pour les jeunes enfants.
2. Parcs de quartier: Il devrait y avoir une aire récréative pour chaque pâté de maisons; dans les zones d'appartements, le parc de quartier ne devrait pas être à plus de 150 m des domiciles.
3. Principales aires récréatives: A 500 m au maximum de toute zone d'habitation, il devrait y avoir un plus grand parc intégré.

Ces directives n'ont pas un caractère exécutoire; toutefois, elles sont généralement suivies lors de l'aménagement de nouveaux quartiers.

En 1974, la Loi de la construction finlandaise a été l'objet d'ajouts minimes mais importants, concernant les terrains de jeux pour enfants dans les lotissements de plus de deux habitations. Une aire de jeux d'au moins 10 m^2 pour les petits enfants est maintenant requise. Elle doit être à l'abri du bruit, de la poussière et de la pollution; elle ne doit donc pas être située par exemple près de zones de stationnement, de circulation, de ramassage des ordures ou de nettoyage d'effets ménagers. L'aire de jeux doit être variée et sa situation naturelle prise en considération; elle doit être ensoleillée, mais on doit également pouvoir y trouver de l'ombre. A côté de l'aire de jeux pour jeunes enfants, il doit y avoir suffisamment d'installations pour les adultes.

La nouvelle législation et les nouvelles directives portent essentiellement sur l'aménagement physique; quoiqu'à mon avis insuffisants, même ces nouveaux impératifs se sont avérés importants.

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EVALUER EN COLLABORATION AVEC LES JEUNES CE QUE REPRESENTE POUR EUX LEUR MILIEU: UNE ETUDE DE CAS POUR LA REGION DE LA BAIE DE SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIE

par Robin C. Moore

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I. L'UTILISATION PAR L'ENFANT DU MILIEU EN VOIE D'URBANISATION

On demanda à deux enfants de 10 ans de faire un dessin de tous les "endroits favoris" près de chez eux où ils allaient après la classe, en fin de semaine et durant l'été.

L'une des filles eut terminé en quelques minutes. Elle avait dessiné un carré surmonté d'un triangle, représentant sa maison, et une forme rectangulaire qui était son école (voir illustration 1). Les deux étaient reliés par un trait en forme de L (l'itinéraire de l'autobus scolaire à Oakland, expliqua-t-elle). Tout le dessin avait été fait au feutre noir.

L'autre fille utilisa les sept crayons de couleur de cire fournis. Au bout de 45 minutes, elle avait rempli la feuille de papier de 18 pouces par 24. Son dessin, extrêmement détaillé, était plein d'illustrations, de reliefs et d'indications. Elle demanda si elle pouvait revenir le lendemain pour une autre séance, et son dessin couvrit finalement deux feuilles: il représentait sa maison dans les collines dominant la vallée rurale de la Napa, avec tout autour un domaine boisé, des champs et des endroits personnels (voir illustration 2). Plusieurs des autres enfants ruraux qui participèrent firent également des dessins à plusieurs feuilles.

Ces illustrations sont-elles le reflet logique des relations de ces enfants avec le milieu? Le contraste manifeste est-il significatif de différences dans la qualité de leur vie? L'enfant urbain semblait n'avoir pratiquement aucune sorte de relation illustrable avec son milieu. Par comparaison, chez l'enfant rural, la représentation était débordante. Le contraste était trop frappant pour pouvoir s'expliquer par une différence entre les talents graphiques.

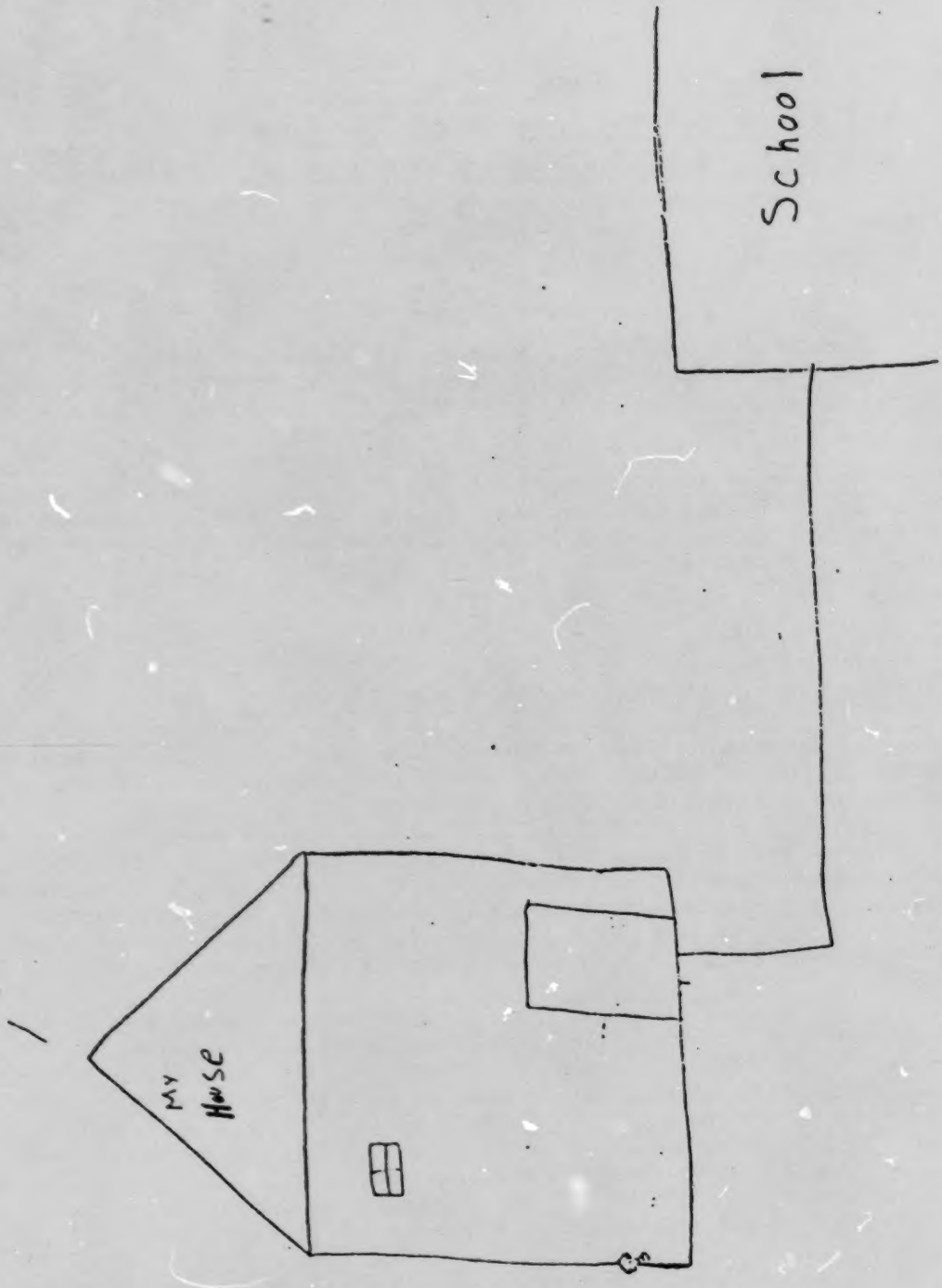
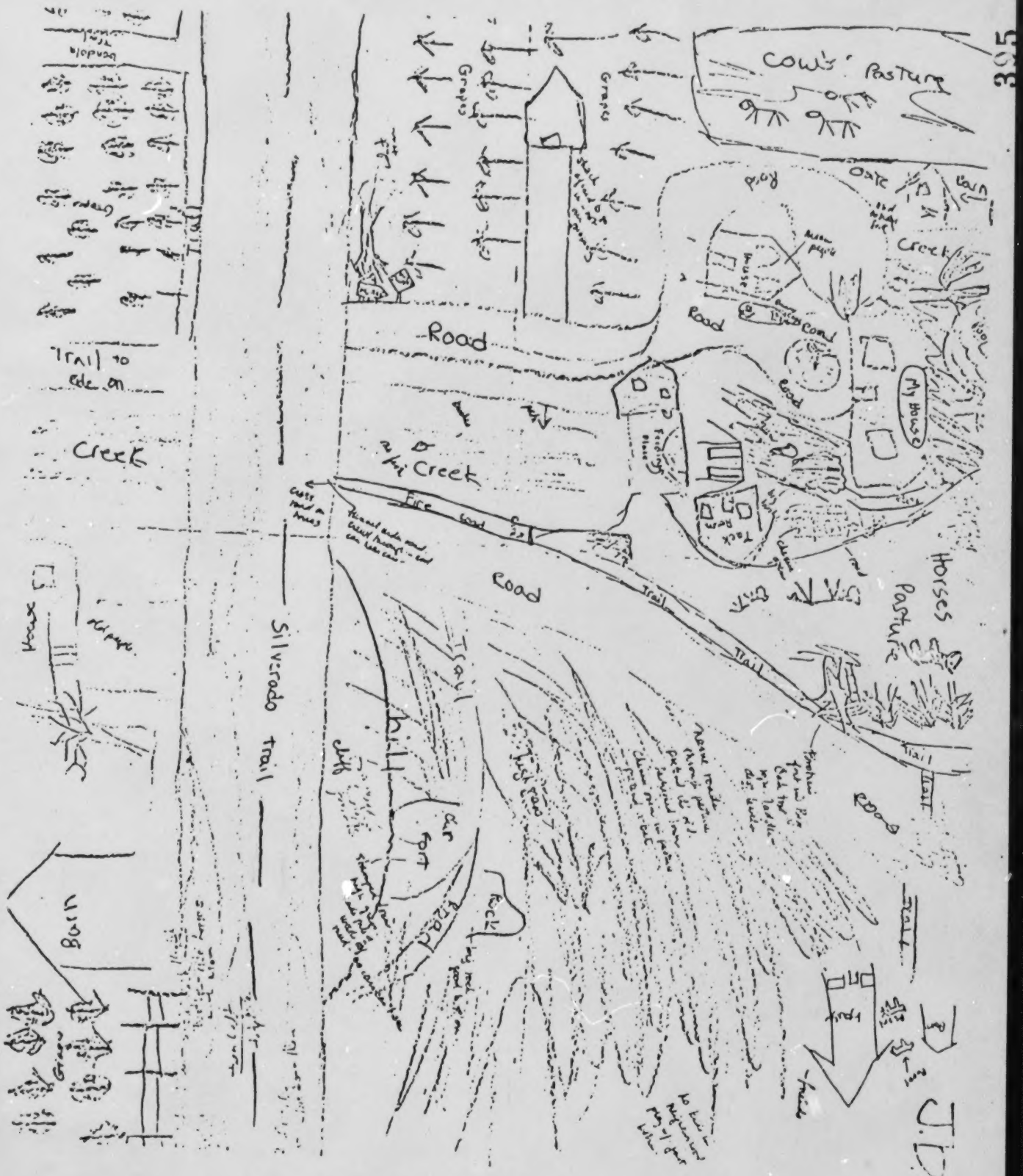


ILLUSTRATION 1. LE MILIEU D'UN ENFANT A OAKLAND, CALIFORNIE


COWS' Pasture
Road
Creek
Trail
Silverado trail
Horses Pasture
Fire road
Trail
Road
Creek
Trail to
Creek
Road
Trail
Trail
Road
Trail
Road
Trail
Road

Si l'expérience environnementale est importante pour le bon développement de l'enfant, nous semblons alors avoir des cas extrêmes de privation et d'enrichissement. L'idée inverse vient également à l'esprit: qu'est-ce qu'impliquent pour le bon aménagement du milieu ces expériences extrêmes? Si l'adulte est l'image de l'enfant, on voit difficilement comment l'enfant de Oakland pourrait avoir plus tard ce qu'il faut pour assumer ses responsabilités et se charger de son milieu. En revanche, celui de la vallée de la Napa donnait l'impression de pouvoir faire n'importe quoi.

Les exemples servant d'entrée en matière ressortaient de l'application du projet d'enquête sur l'utilisation par l'enfant du milieu en voie d'urbanisation (U.E.M.U.). Il consistait à déterminer en pratique comment des enfants de 8 à 12 ans, vivant dans des régions plus ou moins urbanisées, interagissaient avec le milieu local auquel ils avaient accès. L'enquête, menée dans la région de la baie de San Francisco durant la période 1974-1976, porta sur un "échantillon de zones urbanisées", allant d'une localité rurale à un centre urbain (voir illustration 3). Elle engloba 256 enfants - et un quart de leurs familles - de six écoles de cinq régions: une vallée rurale (St. Helena), une grande banlieue (Concord et Walnut Creek), une ville universitaire de moyenne densité (Berkeley), une zone urbaine de faible densité (Oakland) et un centre urbain de forte densité (San Francisco).

Pour étudier l'impact du milieu extérieur local sur l'enfant d'âge moyen, on a adopté une méthode d'enquête à caractère "naturaliste", imposant de travailler directement avec les intéressés dans leur milieu. L'objet était de parvenir à une compréhension précise des véritables relations entre l'enfant et son cadre de vie, et d'apprécier les facteurs qui favorisent et contrôlent son épanouissement dans le milieu qu'il utilise et aime.

Comment pouvons-nous découvrir quelles parties du milieu assurent la plus grande motivation extrinsèque, attirent le plus l'usager? Les décisionnaires environnementaux ont besoin de savoir, pour préserver ou recréer les conditions présentant le plus d'intérêt pour l'homme. Afin de répondre à cette question, on a recouru à trois grands moyens d'enquête: la transposition graphique (dessins ou plans des lieux favoris), la consultation individuelle de l'enfant et des parents, et la tournée des endroits favoris sous la conduite de l'enfant.

a) <u>Domaines de valeur</u>

L'enquête pratique sur l'U.E.M.U. a principalement visé à évaluer "l'attraction" du milieu en tant que facteur générique, ainsi qu'à découvrir et apprécier les "facteurs de contrôle" qui facilitent ou contrarient l'accès aux divers éléments physiographiques extérieurs. Dans un précédent exposé concernant l'enregistrement et l'interprétation des données sur les gens et le milieu, j'ai proposé comme principes directeurs trois grands domaines, ou niveaux, de valeur (Moore, 1978).

Il y a tout d'abord le "domaine fonctionnel" de l'utilisation effective: les gens utilisent ce qu'ils prisent, et vice versa. Le problème, avec les enfants et les autres catégories relativement désarmées, est qu'ils

ILLUSTRATION 3. ECHANTILLON ETUDIE DANS LA REGION EN VOIE D'URBANISATION DE LA BAIE DE SAN FRANCISCO

ne peuvent pas librement choisir car leur accès à un ensemble d'expériences est souvent limité. Dans sa vie de tous les jours, l'enfant doit utiliser ce qui est disponible.

Il y a en second lieu le domaine formé des valeurs, de la perception sensorielle et de la mémoire à long terme. Avec un peu de stimulation, les adultes peuvent faire rejaillir des souvenirs puissants d'expériences vécues étant enfants (voir Cooper Marcus, 1978; et Childhood City Newsletter, décembre 1978). Beaucoup de ces images persistantes tournent autour de lieux familiers au sein ou aux alentours du foyer, tandis que d'autres ont trait à des expériences occasionnelles ou même uniques, où la qualité de l'endroit semble bien plus importante que la quantité de temps qui y a été passé. Les valeurs formées représentent le souvenir persistant de diverses sortes d'expériences environnementales. Le présent exposé porte avant tout sur les résultats produits dans ce domaine par l'enquête sur l'U.E.M.U., quand on a demandé à des enfants de dessiner et d'expliquer les endroits importants pour eux.

Il y a troisièmement les valeurs de l'interdépendance biologique. Certaines, comme le besoin vital d'air, de nourriture et d'eau, sont évidentes. D'autres, en revanche, sont beaucoup moins tangibles; exemple: si la stimulation des sens est essentielle au développement de l'intellect, quels sont les milieux les plus fructueux? Quelle différence y a-t-il entre jouer dans un cours d'eau naturel et dans une fontaine en ville? Du point de vue de la biosphère, l'expérience du cours d'eau peut être plus importante; mais, d'un point de vue humain, c'est peut-être celle du centre-ville qui l'est. Il s'agit d'affronter une foule de questions de ce genre si l'on veut essayer d'améliorer la relation entre les gens et leur milieu.

b) Améliorer la relation entre les gens et leur univers

Le projet d'enquête sur l'U.E.M.U. visait à promouvoir le déploiement d'une action consciente par le gouvernement et les organismes privés pour améliorer la relation entre les gens et leur univers en voie d'urbanisation. On part du principe que l'enfance est la clé de cette interaction vitale. Dans le courant de l'histoire biologique, bien des milieux ont été exploités pour servir le développement humain. A l'aube d'un potentiel technologique pratiquement illimité, un besoin critique se fait sentir pour les êtres humaines de rétablir l'équilibre, de "consolider" leurs cadres de vie, de commencer à organiser un futur mutuellement enrichissant. Pour que cette tâche formidable puisse être menée à bien, il faut que davantage de gens grandissent avec une meilleure expérience et connaissance des conditions environnementales de leur vie.

II. LE CADRE METHODOLOGIQUE

Pour obtenir qu'il soit convenu d'une action, nous devons nous attacher à différencier les "bonnes" et les "mauvaises" corrélations, et éviter de dissocier inutilement des contextes généraux comme "ville" et "campagne". Chaque corrélation est contrôlée par une multitude de facteurs ... Certaines sont enrichissantes, d'autres non. Dans certains types de contextes,

nous pouvons en déduire que l'enrichissement est plus probable, mais il n'est jamais garanti. On a relevé des relations "bonnes" et "mauvaises" dans tous les endroits étudiés.

En fin de compte, il faut plus qu'un simple constat pour apprécier la qualité relative des situations locales. En quoi la réaction humaine à un "terrain de jeux" asphalté diffère-t-elle de celle à quelques yards de trottoir abrité ou de terrain vague en friche? Comment peut-on faire une comparaison significative entre la diversité du milieu humain de San Francisco et la variété des systèmes naturels de St. Helena, et quels genres de valeurs intermédiaires les banlieues offrent-elles?

L'éventail et la richesse des données qualitatives sont énormes et posent un problème d'interprétation. Pour éviter de trop simplifier et d'abréger l'information prématurément, il a fallu tenir compte des divers facteurs environnementaux, communautaires, individuels et biologiques contribuant à préserver d'authentiques "cultures humano-environnementales", localement distinctes.

Du point de vue méthodologique, j'ai jugé nécessaire de "faire remonter" la connaissance, en partant de la qualité des micro-situations individuelles pour passer au niveau plus large et plus quantitatif du système collectif. Le plus gros des résultats de l'enquête porte au "micro-niveau" et consiste en un ensemble de descriptions détaillées d'endroits étudiés en compagnie des différents enfants. Au cours des travaux, j'ai été énormément impressionné par la variabilité des situations, traduisant une grande diversité culturelle, sociale, individuelle et physique. J'ai l'intention d'utiliser ces résultats dans un prochain ouvrage, afin de faire vivre au lecteur une série de voyages ou d'"histoires" dans le monde favori de l'enfant, à partir de la campagne jusqu'au coeur de la ville (Moore, Childhood's Domain, en préparation). Après le recueil analytique, la tentation a été grande de fragmenter les histoires et de s'en servir pour illustrer différents aspects de l'interprétation, sous des rubriques dissociées du contexte quantitatif. Le faire, je pense, aurait été fausser malhonnêtement l'intégrité des données.

La démarche à plusieurs niveaux que j'ai adoptée a principalement consisté au début à se pencher sur les diverses relations de chaque intéressé avec son milieu physique et social. Certains enfants avaient accès à un riche éventail de ressources et d'espaces physiques à bien des niveaux, ce qui leur permettait de développer des relations empathiques, intimes, avec leur milieu; d'autres, par contre, n'avaient pratiquement aucun contact avec le milieu avoisinant. Parfois, la chose semblait imputable à la personnalité de l'intéressé. Toutefois, en général, les craintes parentales (de la circulation, par exemple), les traditions culturelles (comme les puissantes attaches nationales de la communauté asiatique) et le défaut de possibilités environnementales (par exemple, le manque de variété ou d'accès à des ressources) paraissaient avoir plus d'importance.

Faire partager l'expérience pose un dilemme. Les "histoires" qui pourraient ajouter une touche très vivante au tableau d'ensemble sont trop volumineuses et impossibles à présenter sous une forme condensée. Je vais donc les laisser de côté dans cet exposé et donner à la place un aperçu général au moyen des résultats plus quantitatifs.

Heureusement, chaque lecteur a un atout pour contrer le problème de communication: des souvenirs personnels de la vie d'enfant ou des "autobiographies environnementales" qui illustrent peut-être des formes plus universelles de relations. Un numéro de la Childhood City Newsletter (décembre 1978) indique que la production d'autobiographies environnementales n'est pas seulement un moyen de formation important pour les spécialistes en aménagement, qu'elle aide à mieux apprécier leurs propres valeurs en matière de milieu; elle peut également devenir un moyen thérapeutique à usage général, en aidant les gens à comprendre ce qu'ils sont et pourquoi (voir aussi Cooper Marcus, 1978).

Le grand problème qui se pose maintenant est que la faculté de produire des autobiographies de haute qualité sur les endroits favoris ne peut plus être tenue pour acquise. Une volonté de recherche, de discussion et de compréhension s'impose pour que les possibilités ne soient pas perdues, mais améliorées dans le processus d'urbanisation. A l'Ouest, elles peuvent prendre de l'importance (en concurrence avec la télévision) comme substitut aux soutiens sociaux traditionnels - en voie de disparition - de l'enfance urbaine (parents au foyer, familles élargies et activités scolaires hors-programme sont des exemples).

III. RESULTATS DE L'ENQUETE SUR L'U.E.M.U.

a) Endroits favoris

Le tableau 1 répertorie tous les endroits/éléments dessinés par les 265 enfants associés à l'enquête. Il représente en fait un bilan environnemental de la région de la baie, suivant des enfants de 8 à 10 ans. La "fréquence de mention" est simplement le nombre de fois qu'un élément est dessiné, divisé par le nombre d'enfants (265). En d'autres termes, elle indique les chances d'apparition d'un élément donné dans un "dessin moyen" (ou la représentation mentale de l'enfant), ou illustre - en termes numériques - l'impact du milieu de la région de la baie sur l'usager.

On peut immédiatement voir que la liste reflète la variété trouvée sur place. Seuls trois des éléments ont une fréquence de mention supérieure à .50 (c'est-à-dire qu'ils risquent d'apparaître dans un dessin sur deux); ce sont "propre domicile de l'enfant", "rues de passage" et "mention de soi de l'enfant". Un peu plus de la moitié seulement des éléments ont une fréquence de mention supérieure à .10 (apparaissent dans un dessin sur dix); les autres ressortent très sporadiquement d'une multitude de représentations.

Les vingt premiers éléments, avec une fréquence de mention de .20 ou plus, peuvent peut-être passer pour représentatifs d'un univers relativement partagé (par au moins un enfant sur cinq). Ils méritent une attention spéciale et pourraient peut-être servir de point de départ pour discuter des besoins environnementaux locaux. Je dis bien "discuter", car l'avenir doit rester ouvert. Même si la liste est révélatrice et offre un moyen de repère utile, elle ne doit pas être utilisée comme une prescription - simplement projeter le statu quo dans l'avenir ne suffit pas.

TABLEAU 1

ENDROITS/ELEMENTS MENTIONNES, PAR ORDRE DE FREQUENCE[1]

ENDROITS/ELEMENTS	NOMBRE DE MENTIONS	FREQUENCE DE MENTION
1. Propre domicile de l'enfant	210	.79
2. Rues de passage	209	.79
3. Mention de soi de l'enfant	174	.66
4. Domicile d'amis/de parents	127	.48
5. Ecole de l'enfant	105	.40
6. Ami(s) de l'enfant	94	.35
7. Magasin(s)	93	.35
8. Parc communautaire	90	.34
9. Arbres isolés	82	.31
10. Pelouses	82	.31
11. Clôtures	70	.26
12. Terrain de jeux/cour d'école/équipement	70	.26
13. Circulation	69	.26
14. Bâtiments communautaires	69	.26
15. Habitations/appartements	61	.23
16. Domicile de voisins/de gardien	57	.22
17. Cour de jeu/véranda	57	.22
18. Terre/sable/gravier/écorce	56	.21
19. Ruisseau/cour d'eau	55	.21
20. Pistes/raccourcis/sentiers/allées	53	.20
21. Trottoirs	51	.19
22. Parents de l'enfant	51	.19
23. Piscine	47	.18
24. Terrain de sports	47	.18
25. Colline/montagnes	46	.17
26. Culs-de-sac/allées d'accès	45	.17
27. Frères et soeurs de l'enfant	44	.17
28. Intérieurs de bâtiments	43	.16
29. Court de sport	41	.15
30. Topographie	38	.14
31. Arbustes	38	.14
32. Autobus/STRRB/arrêts[2]	37	.14
33. Herbes hautes/herbes folles/feuilles	37	.14
34. Arbres à escalader	36	.14
35. Bouquets d'arbres	32	.12
36. Proches de l'enfant/autres adultes	31	.12
37. Chiens/chats	30	.11
38. Conditions climatiques	29	.11
39. Terre agricole	27	.10
40. Places fortes/clubs	25	.09
41. Jeu aquatique	25	.09
42. Arbres fruitiers/vignes	25	.09

TABLEAU 1 (suite)

ENDROITS/ELEMENTS	NOMBRE DE MENTIONS	FREQUENCE DE MENTION
43. Rochers	25	.09
44. Parc régional/terrain de foire/terrain de camping	24	.09
45. Terrain vague/terrain en cours d'aménagement	24	.09
46. Chemin de fer	23	.09
47. Parc de stationnement	23	.09
48. Bâtiments divers/installations pour jouer	23	.09
49. Artère marchande/commerciale	22	.08
50. Mare/lac/réservoir/océan	22	.08
51. Poste à essence	19	.07
52. Poisson/faune aquatique	19	.07
53. Ponts/tunnels	18	.07
54. Routes de terre	18	.07
55. Fleurs	18	.07
56. Cabane dans les arbres	18	.07
57. Jardin	16	.06
58. Patinoire/bowling	16	.06
59. Eglise	16	.06
60. Animaux sauvages	16	.06
61. Centre d'achat/galeries marchandes	15	.06
62. Chevaux	14	.05
63. Bâtiments/installations abandonnés	14	.05
64. Animaux de ferme	13	.05
65. Oiseaux sauvages/insectes	13	.05
66. Cinéma/cinéma en plein air	10	.04
67. Balançoire	10	.04
68. Autres animaux domestiques	8	.03
69. Cachettes secrètes	7	.03
70. Bitume/béton	6	.02
71. Terre boisée	5	.02
72. Canal ou ruisseau	2	.01

[1] U.E.M.U.: US graphic simulations, N-265

[2] Système de transit rapide de la Région de la baie

Un aperçu plus général s'impose de toute évidence à des fins "politiques". Dans le tableau 2, les 72 éléments sont groupés en 16 grandes catégories. Les lieux de résidence avec leurs environs immédiats, les gens et la végétation viennent nettement en tête (leur fréquence de mention est supérieure à 1.0, c'est-à-dire qu'ils risquent de figurer dans la représentation de chaque enfant). Les voies d'accès suivent de près, avec une fréquence de mention de .92. Le résultat le plus important est peut-être le fait que les éléments de la nature entrent pour plus du quart dans les mentions et ont ensemble une fréquence de mention supérieure à 3. En incluant les espaces libres (composés principalement d'éléments naturels), le pourcentage dépasse largement 30%. Cela confirme nettement l'impression, déjà donnée par bien des histoires individuelles, que l'expérience des objets et phénomènes naturels devrait être considérée comme un aspect crucial du monde de l'enfant.

La faible place des animaux, des éléments aquatiques et des constructions d'enfant contraste de manière frappante avec l'importance que laissent entrevoir bien des "histoires" à ces éléments. Elle traduit certainement un manque d'accès à ces ressources, au lieu d'un manque de motivation. Il faut manifestement mieux faire prendre conscience de leur importance, les préserver ou les promouvoir.

Un point important à signaler en passant est le rang très modeste des installations sportives. Dénote-t-il une insuffisance d'aménagements, ou bien donne-t-il une idée exacte de leur utilisation? (chose certaine, elles n'occupent pas une place marquante dans la plupart des histoires). La place modeste de ces installations contraste avec l'accent généralement important mis sur les sports par certains parents et bien des municipalités. Ce point demande à être éclairci. Si le rang est une bonne indication de la demande, il faudrait alors de toute évidence cesser d'accorder une priorité aux sports pour reporter les ressources sur des éléments insuffisants, ayant un fort impact, comme les animaux, les éléments aquatiques et les constructions d'enfant.

Enfin, il faut souligner la dernière place des intérieurs. Elle indique clairement l'importance du milieu extérieur pour l'enfant.

On s'est également penché sur les endroits favoris des enfants, en leur demandant d'énumérer ceux où ils vont après l'école et en fin de semaine. Les résultats se trouvent résumés au tableau 3, avec le pourcentage de mentions. Là encore, les lieux de résidence (domiciles et jardins) viennent en premier, entrant pour plus du tiers dans les réponses. Près d'un autre tiers de celles-ci englobaient des endroits situés dans le voisinage immédiat, parmi lesquels les parcs et les terrains d'établissements étaient de loin les plus importants. Il faut souligner la faible place des cours d'école et des terrains de jeux; si l'on considère que ces endroits sont spécialement conçus pour les enfants, ils ne semblent pas exercer un grand attrait. En revanche, le tableau 3 énumère pas mal d'autres lieux favoris qui méritent une attention spéciale d'un point de vue "politique".

TABLEAU 2

FREQUENCE DE MENTION GLOBALE POUR 16 CATEGORIES D'ENDROITS/ELEMENTS[1]

CATEGORIE D'ENDROIT/ELEMENT	FREQUENCE DE MENTION	POURCENTAGE
Lieux de résidence	1.99	17
Gens	1.49	12
N-Végétation[2]	1.05	9
Voies d'accès[3]	.92	8
Installations communautaires	.91	8
Espaces libres (officiels et à usage particulier)	.87	7
Rues de passage	.78	7
N-Surfaces naturelles	.62	5
Installations sportives	.57	4
N-Macro-éléments de la nature[4]	.55	5
Bâtiments commerciaux	.49	4
N-Animaux	.43	4
N-Eléments aquatiques	.39	3
Clôtures	.26	2
Circulation	.26	2
Constructions d'enfant[5]	.24	2
Intérieurs	.16	1
TOTAL	11.98	100

1 U.E.M.U.: US graphic simulations, N-265

2 N, éléments de la nature - 3,04 ou 25,4% du total

3 Inclut toutes les sortes de voies d'accès, sauf les "rues de passage" car elles ont une fonction plus ambigüe.

4 Inclut les éléments de grande envergure ou imposants, comme les collines, les montagnes, les conditions climatiques et la topographie.

5 Inclut les places fortes, les clubs, les installations diverses utilisées pour jouer, les cachettes secrètes.

TABLEAU 3

ENDROITS FAVORIS OU ALLER APRES L'ECOLE* ET LES FINS DE SEMAINE**

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Lieux de résidence (de l'enfant, d'amis, du gardien et de parents)	214	35
Lieux près du domicile (par exemple, rue/cour/ parc de stationnement)	24	4
Cour d'école/terrain de jeux	53	9
Parcs/terrains d'établissements	103	17
Installations récréatives urbaines (gymnase, ligue mineure, terrains de sport)	29	5
piscines	19	3
Lieux commerciaux (magasins, centres d'achat)	27	5
Cinéma	13	2
Grand air (par exemple, champs/vignobles/ collines)	29	5
Endroits/éléments spéciaux (par exemple, grottes/ fossé/cabane dans les arbres/chantier de construction)	34	6
Lieux aquatiques (ruisseaux, mares, rivières et cours d'eau)	17	3
Lieux éloignés (déplacements de fin de semaine)	29	5
Non spécifié	5	1
TOTAL:	595	100%

* 256 interrogés
** 173 interrogés
} résultats combinés

b) Déplacement le plus lointain

On a ensuite demandé aux enfants quel était le déplacement le plus lointain qu'ils avaient fait sans un adulte (tableau 4). L'importance de la marche et l'éventail des possibilités offertes au piéton ressortent clairement (72% des mentions). Le centre commercial prend soudain une nouvelle importance, non pas tant comme un cadre de jeu que comme une limite territoriale ou un but spatial. Divers éléments du milieu représentent aussi manifestement des bornes clé, dans la mesure où les horizons géographiques s'élargissent. Les parcs ajoutent aussi beaucoup à cet égard. Le tableau 4 indique également que la bicyclette est pour l'enfant un moyen important d'étendre son territoire (malgré les dangers de la circulation).

c) Endroits interdits

On a demandé aux enfants quels étaient les endroits où ils n'étaient pas autorisés à aller (tableau 5). Trente pourcent des réponses ont indiqué peu de restrictions et une énorme liberté, à condition d'observer certaines précautions (comme vérifier au préalable). En revanche, certains enfants (6% des réponses) se voyaient imposer par les parents de sévères restrictions qui limitaient certainement leur expérience, et compromettaient peut-être leur future aptitude à faire face à leur milieu.

Les endroits les plus souvent interdits étaient les lieux relatifs à la circulation, suivis par les centres commerciaux, les endroits pour adultes (comme certains cinémas), les parcs, et les lieux naturels, aquatiques et autres. L'interdiction non négligeable des parcs et des lieux aquatiques est une question qui mérite d'être approfondie, car ce sont également des éléments très motivants, comme le révèle par ailleurs l'enquête.

d) Craintes environnementales

Le tableau 6 énumère les raisons pour lesquelles des endroits sont interdits. Les principales sources de "crainte environnementale" apparaissent clairement au travers des rubriques Craintes sociales, Dangers physiques, Dangers de la circulation et Sens de l'orientation insuffisant. Les résultats devraient intéresser un large éventail de gens directement ou indirectement responsables du bien-être de l'enfant. Ils soulèvent un certain nombre de questions, à savoir par exemple si certaines craintes sont fondées ou "irrationnelles". Dans le second cas, il s'agit d'éduquer les parents pour au moins leur montrer les répercussions néfastes des restrictions territoriales injustifiées.

e) Evaluation de la vie à l'extérieur

1. Ce qui plaît: Les trois dernières questions, invitant les enfants à évaluer leur vie à l'extérieur et à recommander des changements, sont particulièrement intéressantes. Les réponses démontrent de façon concluante qu'il faut associer l'enfant à l'aménagement de son milieu. Si les adultes ont parfois du mal à voir pourquoi la vie à l'extérieur est si importante pour l'enfant, le tableau 7 devrait apporter la réponse. La principale raison donnée était, de loin, l'expérience du milieu naturel: végétation, vie

TABLEAU 4

DEPLACEMENT LE PLUS LOINTAIN SANS UN ADULTE

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
RENDU A PIED A:		
Centre commercial (par exemple, magasin/ centre d'achat)	43	33
Sites naturels (par exemple, plage/ruisseau)	34	26
Parc	25	19
Centre d'activité dans la vie sociale (par exemple, domicile d'ami, cinéma)	18	14
Ecole	6	4
Environs du domicile	6	4
TOTAL:	132	100%
En pourcentage de toutes les mentions:		72%
RENDU EN BICYCLETTE A:	26	15
RENDU EN AUTOBUS A: (par exemple, San Francisco/ Sacramento)	15	8
RENDU PAR LE STRRB* A: (par exemple, Fremont/ Oakland)	6	3
RENDU EN AVION A: (Seattle, Los Angeles/ Wisconsin/Iowa)	4	2
	183	100%

(Ne sait pas/nulle part/toujours avec la mère: 7)

* Système de transit rapide de la Région de la baie

TABLEAU 5

Y A-T-IL DES ENDROITS OU VOUS N'ETES PAS AUTORISES A ALLER?

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Peu de restrictions	46	30
Sévères restrictions	9	6
Rues, grand'routes et lieux reliés à la circulation	24	15
Centres commerciaux	19	12
Endroits pour adultes	18	11
Parcs	15	9
Lieux aquatiques	14	9
Lieux naturels (autres qu'aquatiques) (par exemple, collines/champs)	13	8
TOTAL:	158	100%

(Pas de réponse/ne sait pas: 21)

TABLEAU 6

RAISONS POUR LESQUELLES DES ENDROITS SONT INTERDITS

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Craintes sociales		
Crainte d'agression/ de brutalité/ d'enlèvement	9	
Menaces venant d'autres enfants	7	
Appréhensions sociales vagues (par exemple, "beaucoup de gens bizarres par ici")	7	
	23	27
Dangers physiques		
Crainte de l'eau/de se mouiller/de se noyer	9	
Autres dangers physiques	7	
Serpents/chiens/insectes/animaux	6	
	22	25
Dangers de la circulation	19	22
Sens de l'orientation insuffisant		
(par exemple, "C'est trop loin ... pourrait se perdre")	15	17
Divers	8	9
TOTAL:	87	100%

(Ne sait pas: 4)

TABLEAU 7

QU'EST-CE QUI VOUS PLAIT DANS LA VIE A L'EXTERIEUR?

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Végétation et animaux	60	19
Terre		
Creuser/faire des pâtés/empiler de la terre)	3	1
Temps/climat/expériences sensorielles	61	20
Vague		
(par exemple, aime juste être à l'extérieur)	5	2
Endroits précis		
(par exemple, hutte, place forte)	24	7
Objets fabriqués par l'homme		
(avions dans le ciel/voitures qui passent)	2	1
Contraste entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur		
(par exemple, pas chaud, confiné, bruyant comme à l'intérieur)	22	7
Activités précises		
(par exemple, jouer au ballon/nager)	44	14
Accès et choix		
(par exemple, beaucoup d'endroits où aller, jouer)	28	9
Jeu	24	8
Relations sociales		
(par exemple, des amis avec qui jouer)	26	8
N'aime pas être à l'extérieur	13	4
TOTAL:	312	100%

animale, temps, climat et autres expériences sensorielles. Les plantes, les arbres et l'air pur étaient les éléments les plus souvent mentionnés.

Le nombre très faible de mentions concernant le contact avec la terre appelle des commentaires. Il ne peut certainement pas refléter le vrai degré de motivation. Deux possibilités sont à envisager. Premièrement, les enfants ne jouent plus avec de la terre quand ils ont entre 8 et 12 ans. Pour les beaucoup plus jeunes, c'est à n'en pas douter une forme de jeu très importante (si l'on inclut le bac de sable). Le contact avec la terre peut être très tôt une nécessité - symboliquement, il semble l'être. Toutefois, cet argument est fortement démenti par plusieurs des visites aux endroits où "jouer avec de la terre" occupait une place importante.

Deuxièmement, il se peut fort bien que le type de terre de la région de la baie se prête mal au jeu. Dans bien des endroits, le "sol" consiste en une terre argileuse très lourde, rougeâtre, qui devient dure comme de la pierre en été, boueuse et froide en hiver. Il ne convient mieux pour le jeu que s'il est cultivé. L'enfant qui joue court alors le risque d'"empiéter" sur le domaine d'un adulte. Si les enfants étaient associés au règlement de ce problème, il devrait être possible de leur réserver dans les espaces libres du coin des aires où jouer avec de la terre. Il faut également éduquer les parents pour leur apprendre à déterminer quelles portions des espaces libres autour du foyer pourraient être affectées aux enfants. Et il importe bien entendu, peut-être avant toute chose, d'éliminer les cours d'école asphaltées. Après quoi, les plantes, les animaux et les expériences sensorielles connexes qu'apprécient tant les jeunes pourraient devenir partie intégrante de l'existence quotidienne, notamment dans les zones fortement construites.

Certains enfants étaient attirés à l'extérieur par des endroits précis comme "le marécage" ou "le parc", qui, d'après le tableau 7 (et les précédents), évoquent fortement des ressources naturelles. Les objets fabriqués par l'homme étaient, en eux-mêmes, rarement mentionnés.

Le tableau 7 fait également largement mention du contraste entre "l'intérieur" et "l'extérieur": échapper à "l'atmosphère étouffante, bruyante" de l'intérieur pour trouver l'air pur et la quiétude à l'extérieur. Beaucoup plus d'enfants que nous ne l'imaginons peut-être sont sensibles au bruit - surtout s'ils ne le causent pas - et ont besoin d'endroits paisibles où se réfugier. Comme l'indique la place importante des activités précises dans le tableau 7, l'extérieur est également un endroit nécessaire à tout un ensemble d'activités demandant de l'espace (par exemple, jouer au ballon).

2. Ce qui déplaît dans la vie à l'extérieur: Quand on leur a demandé ce qui leur déplaisait dans la vie à l'extérieur (tableau 8), les enfants ont fortement fait valoir le côté négatif du temps, du climat et de la vie animale. Ils ont notamment mentionné la pluie et les extrêmes climatiques, d'où l'importance de faire attention aux problèmes de micro-climat au niveau de l'urbanisme et de l'aménagement des espaces pour jeunes. Ils ne voient pas non plus que des bons côtés à la vie animale. L'enfant a besoin d'être protégé, par le biais de l'éducation et des moyens directs, contre des bêtes comme les serpents à sonnette, les moustiques et les parasites - comme

TABLEAU 8

QU'EST-CE QUI VOUS DEPLAIT DANS LA VIE A L'EXTERIEUR?

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Temps/climat		
(par exemple, pluie/froid/soleil/chaud)	31	15
Vie animale		
(par exemple, moustiques/parasites/poules bruyantes)	24	11
Chiens et chats		
(par exemple, chiens qui me courent après)	12	6
Végétation		
(par exemple, plantes qui piquent/sumac vénéreux)	6	3
Accidents physiques		
(par exemple, tomber et se faire mal)	6	3
Pollution		
(par exemple, air vicié/bruit/déchets)	29	14
Circulation	20	10
Autres enfants		
(par exemple, méchanceté/bagarre)	17	8
Adultes		
(par exemple, gens armés/soûlards/trop de gens)	15	7
Divers	17	8
Rien ne déplaît	32	15
TOTAL:	209	100%

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n'importe qui d'autre. Il est clair que les chiens peuvent être gênants et parfois carrément menaçants, même pour les enfants plus âgés. Il faut davantage tenir compte de ce problème et mieux s'y attaquer.

Il est intéressant de noter que les enfants ont trouvé très peu à redire à la végétation. C'est manifestement une ressource plus inoffensive, qui ne se "venge" pas - sauf dans le cas du sumac vénéreux (qui est vraiment gênant) et des plantes qui "piquent". La végétation, avec sa magnifique diversité, s'avère un élément énormément apprécié. Sa présence peut donc être vue comme un critère de qualité dans le milieu de l'enfant.

Un quart des réponses a tourné autour de la pollution et de la circulation. La pollution de l'air, mentionnée sous diverses formes ("autobus qui sentent mauvais" et "gaz d'échappement", par exemple), a été principalement incriminée. Cette sensibilité peut tenir à l'accent actuellement mis, au niveau politique et dans les médias, sur la qualité du macro-environnement; elle est également la retombée principale de l'éducation écologique dans les écoles. La chose intéressante à noter est que l'enfant a encore sa propre façon de voir et de juger des phénomènes comme la pollution. Les pédagogues auraient peut-être intérêt à faire davantage attention à sa conception des problèmes locaux et au moyen de la rattacher aux plus vastes réalités, au lieu d'adopter une démarche préconçue en lui enseignant à quel point le monde va mal, sans se mettre à sa portée. Les phénomènes locaux sont réels. Si l'enfant apportait son opinion, les problèmes plus larges seraient peut-être abordés d'une façon plus réaliste et plus durable.

La circulation n'a été au centre que d'un dixième des critiques, ce qui n'est pas beaucoup compte tenu de l'ampleur des répercussions - mobilité réduite, blessures graves et accidents fatals (tableau 6). Elle est peut-être la meilleure preuve que les enfants tiennent le monde pour acquis. Ils l'admettent comme un élément immuable de leur milieu, au même titre que les maisons et les arbres. Il est donc urgent de faire de la circulation un sujet d'éducation écologique, en raison de sa profonde influence sur la vie de l'enfant. A ce titre, elle offre de bonnes possibilités d'instruction (observation, maths et langage descriptif). Il y a des implications politiques et économiques manifestes, car un débat sur la société de l'automobile met en cause pratiquement tous les aspects de la vie contemporaine.

L'autre source de critique est d'ordre social - englobant aussi bien les "autres enfants" que les adultes. Néanmoins, ces éléments combinés occupent une faible place (15% des réponses) par rapport aux aspects négatifs du milieu physique. A Oakland, les enfants étaient socialement plus critiques qu'ailleurs; et (avec ceux de San Francisco) ils avaient davantage à redire à la pollution et la circulation. Nous avons donc l'impression d'avoir là la double manifestation d'une vie confinée. La privation "physique" entraîne une plus grande dépendance sociale; mais la privation sociale est également telle qu'elle entraîne la violence. L'enfant est alors incapable de trouver le soutien "vital" nécessaire, que ce soit dans le milieu physique ou bien social. S'attaquer à ce problème, au travers de la participation directe des jeunes eux-mêmes, doit être une des premières tâches de l'éducation - qui a alors au moins une petite chance d'être adaptée au problème du confinement.

La rubrique "divers" au tableau 8 englobe des critiques précises formulées par les enfants à propos de leur milieu, par exemple: "le revêtement des rues est inégal, de sorte qu'on ne peut pas faire de planche à roulettes" ou bien "la paroisse a déménagé à côté et on a démoli la maison d'un ami". Un bilan comme celui-ci, dressé par n'importe quel groupe d'enfants, constituerait le bon point de départ d'un processus d'éducation.

3. Ce que l'enfant aimerait trouver de plus ou de différent dans la vie à l'extérieur: Le dernier point ci-dessus se trouve largement étoffé par la question finale, en l'occurrence: "Qu'aimeriez-vous trouver de plus ou de différent dans la vie à l'extérieur?" (tableau 9). Au vu des résultats, on peut difficilement ne pas être convaincu que les jeunes auront beaucoup à dire à propos de la qualité de leur milieu si on leur en donne la chance. (Pour 7% seulement des répondants, le statu quo semblait acceptable.)

On peut noter tout d'abord que le foyer de l'enfant n'est pas ce qui vient en premier à l'esprit quand il s'agit de changements, même s'il constitue le plus souvent le centre de sa vie fonctionnelle - que ses parents soient riches ou pauvres. La raison la plus évidente à cela est que le domicile est censé être sous la coupe des parents (ou du propriétaire), au point que l'idée de changements provoqués par l'enfant est inconcevable. Quand il s'agit pour des enfants de 8 à 12 ans de vraiment peser sur le monde, le milieu plus large est là où se trouvent les véritables possibilités (et les amis pour aider).

C'est donc au niveau général du quartier qu'interviennent la plupart des changements physiques. Ils expriment tout un ensemble d'aspirations précises. La plupart sont relativement modestes: "ajouter des balançoires", "ajouter des bancs", "du sable". Certains sont plus importants, comme "ajouter un ruisseau" ou "démolir des maisons pour aménager un parc", et parfois irréalisables: "une station de ski à l'extérieur", "rapprocher Indian Rock".

Plusieurs types de changements locaux sont revenus tellement souvent qu'ils ont formé des rubriques distinctes. Le plus important a été l'adjonction de plantes en général, et d'arbres et de fleurs en particulier. La circulation et la sécurité, les rues et les trottoirs, la faune, les chevaux et les animaux de ferme ont été aussi de gros sujets de préoccupation. Les piscines, comme on s'y attendait, ont été également l'objet d'une certaine attention. Peut-être que l'offre est plus proche de la demande en Californie?

Le fait que places fortes et clubs - en tant qu'aménagements d'enfants - soient peu mentionnés est peut-être surprenant, même s'il cadre avec d'autres résultats (voir, par exemple, tableau 2). Quoiqu'on puisse y voir l'apothéose de la participation des enfants à leur milieu, rares sont ceux qui effectuent en fait la construction de leurs propres bâtiments. Cela tient tout simplement au manque de compétences, de matériaux et d'endroits convenables. On doit se demander si cela se faisait plus souvent dans le passé, et est à encourager plus activement maintenant. Chose certaine, le succès des terrains de jeu d'aventure de type européen, où la principale activité de l'enfant est la construction, est fort éloquent. Bien des

TABLEAU 9

QU'AIMERIEZ-VOUS TROUVER DE PLUS OU DE DIFFERENT DANS LA VIE A L'EXTERIEUR?

	Nombre de mentions	Pourcentage
Statu quo (par exemple, ça va)	22	7
Cadre du foyer (par exemple, avoir ma propre chambre)	12	4
Cadre du quartier (par exemple, des balançoires et des glissières ajoutées)	56	19
Circulation et sécurité	17	6
Rues et trottoirs (par exemple, éliminer les inégalités dans le revêtement de certaines rues et les réserver aux planches à roulettes)	11	4
Végétation (par exemple, des arbres à escalader, des bosquets fruitiers)	34	11
Faune (par exemple, des canards à regarder et nourrir)	15	5
Chevaux et animaux de ferme (par exemple, avoir son propre cheval)	13	4
Piscines	25	8
Places fortes et clubs	9	3
Contrôle de la pollution (par exemple, éliminer les détritus/le smog)	63	21
Contrôles sociaux (par exemple, davantage d'enfants dans notre pâté de maison/mettre fin aux crimes et aux meurtres)	20	7
Déménager (par exemple, vivre à la campagne)	4	1
TOTAL:	302	100%

(Ne sait pas: 5)

histoires faisaient allusion à des clubs ou des places fortes, mais il était rarement question de construction. En d'autres termes, les enfants utilisent le plus souvent comme bâtiments des installations "toutes trouvées", rarement construites de fond en comble même s'ils peuvent "travailler dessus" pendant longtemps. Ainsi, les cabanes dans les arbres peuvent être transmises d'une génération d'enfants à l'autre en étant à tour de rôle embellies et négligées, mais elles sont rarement totalement abandonnées et reconstruites ailleurs.

Le contrôle de la pollution (qui se définit ici comme "trop de quelque chose au mauvais endroit") occupe une place qui cadre avec l'importance accordée à cette nuisance au tableau 8. A peu près la moitié des réponses dans cette rubrique parle d'une manière générale de nettoyer les saletés, les ordures et les détritus; l'autre moitié préconise des choses précises: "éliminer les noyers", "éliminer les chiens qui mordent", "faire une voiture qui ne marche pas à l'essence".

Chose intéressante à noter, le taux des réponses pour les contrôles sociaux est environ la moitié de ce qu'il était pour les problèmes du même ordre au tableau 8. C'est peut-être que l'enfant se dit: "On ne peut pas changer les gens" ou que, d'une manière générale, il se préoccupe plus du milieu physique que des conditions sociales.

IV. L'AVENIR: L'AMENAGEMENT EN TANT QU'EDUCATION

L'enquête décrite partiellement ici m'a convaincu que l'aménagement des espaces libres locaux, sous toutes ses formes, devrait devenir partie intégrante du système plus large d'éducation publique. Elle démontre que les jeunes ont beaucoup à dire à propos de leur milieu si on leur en donne la chance. L'enseignement possible dépasse de très loin une simple "contribution".

La rubrique "contraste entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur", avec celles "accès et choix", "jeu" et "relations sociales", illustre l'attrait général de la vie à l'extérieur du point de vue de la liberté et du choix des expériences. L'extérieur est là où l'enfant peut organiser sa propre vie, "faire des choses", "regarder des gens", "rencontrer d'autres enfants", "se sentir libre", "jouer" ... en d'autres termes interagir d'une manière spéciale et vitale avec le monde.

L'extérieur attire puissamment l'enfant, invité à découvrir le monde. La motivation est le moteur de l'éducation. Quand il se trouve à l'extérieur et dans les conditions qui conviennent, l'enfant peut s'absorber totalement, des heures durant, dans la poursuite de projets et d'activités personnelles. Il semble y avoir un net contraste avec ce qui se passe généralement en classe, où intéresser quelques enfants pendant plus d'un moment à "l'enseignement" est un problème - et encore cela suppose-t-il de l'intimidation, des récompenses et des punitions, ou de véritables ruses.

Fonder l'instruction sur l'expérience de la vie réelle n'est pas une idée nouvelle. Cela a été le grand thème de John Dewey, dont la philosophie pleine de bon sens a été regrettablement ignorée ces dernières années,

même si la crise de l'environnement l'a rendue d'autant plus urgente. La véritable crise n'est bien entendu pas "environnementale"; elle est pédagogique et ne concerne pas uniquement les jeunes enfants, mais toutes les personnes, de tous les âges. Et c'est également une crise urbaine, dans la mesure où c'est en ville que s'impose le plus une éducation basée sur l'expérience. Pourtant, à l'heure actuelle, ce genre d'éducation semble avoir le moins de chances de devenir une stratégie pour s'occuper des cultures de privation.

Il ne devrait rien y avoir de tel qu'une "éducation environnementale". Toute éducation s'insère dans un milieu d'un genre ou d'un autre. Appeler une branche "environnementale" laisse sous-entendre que le reste de l'éducation ne l'est pas. Ce qu'il faut, c'est examiner dans quel genre de milieu s'insère une éducation particulière et observer le genre de relations que les participants ont avec leur milieu: conscientes ou inconscientes, positives ou négatives.

Un autre problème grave est la facilité avec laquelle on considère "l'environnement" comme quelque chose "éloignée", "généralement hors de la ville", exclusivement "verte" et seulement accessible en fin de semaine, aux gens riches et instruits. Ce préjugé contre la ville semble particulièrement puissant en Californie, ou est peut-être caractéristique de toutes les récentes colonies du Nouveau Monde. Quelles que soient ses racines, il a l'effet fâcheux de renforcer des conceptions dichotomiques simplistes à propos de la ville et de la campagne, voulant par exemple que toute construction soit mauvaise et que les systèmes naturels ne peuvent survivre qu'en dehors des villes.

Le terme "environnemental" est devenu de plus en plus synonyme de macro-concepts figés - comme "la terre", "l'air" et "l'eau" - et de critères de qualité techniques et sans rapport avec les expériences intimes de la vie de tous les jours. Chose ironique, c'est dans ce domaine qu'on a mis le plus fortement l'accent en classe - en enseignant aux jeunes enfants que le monde est pollué, dans un état désespéré, au lieu de les laisser découvrir par eux-mêmes le monde tel qu'il est.

Une autre conséquence fâcheuse de l'éducation environnementale axée sur les macro-problèmes est qu'à l'instar des disciplines qui l'ont annoncée (étude de la nature et éducation en matière de préservation), elle est restée un "sujet" distinct ou marginal dans un programme déjà surchargé, "centralisé".

Peut-être que le terme "éducation expérientielle" est plus approprié et exact, si l'on part du principe que l'instruction ne peut être motivée que par de vraies expériences du type de celles offertes par le cadre de jeu local de l'enfant, où un rapprochement entre micro-expérience et macro-connaissance est possible. Dans un milieu local, varié et accessible, une interaction sur une petite échelle peut permettre d'apprécier le système plus large. De ce point de vue, un petit ruisseau du voisinage est bien meilleur qu'un fleuve majestueux rarement vu. A un niveau, les deux s'équivalent sur le plan de l'expérience, mais le cours d'eau proche du foyer présente le gros avantage d'être accessible quand on veut. L'effet de la

circulation sur la "vivabilité" du milieu d'habitation peut s'étudier d'une manière immédiatement fructueuse au niveau des rues locales. Cela offre de grandes possibilités pour les mathématiques appliquées, et les résultats peuvent être facilement transposés par intuition à l'échelon du système urbain plus large.

Ce rapprochement entre réalités particulières et générales soulève le problème de la compétence environnementale. En lui-même, le terme "compétence" réfère généralement en éducation aux aptitudes avec les mots et les nombres. Mais on pense peu aux moyens de l'acquérir, ou de l'exercer, dans la vie réelle. Si on le faisait, il semble que l'on pourrait obtenir non seulement une meilleure instruction et une plus grande aptitude mathématique, mais aussi des personnes plus compétentes, mieux à même de se comprendre elles-mêmes et d'assumer la responsabilité des situations dans lesquelles elles se trouvent.

Cette conception élargie de la compétence implique de bien orienter l'aménagement du monde par l'exercice des aptitudes acquises au travers de l'expérience. Les moyens traditionnels d'éducation morale - par assujettissement à l'autorité des adultes - ne conviennent plus dans un monde en rapide évolution. Un autre processus d'éducation, fondé sur les expériences de l'enfant, ses appréciations et sa prise de décisions relativement à son univers personnel, pourrait avoir beaucoup d'impact. Il introduirait non seulement un ensemble indispensable de bonnes valeurs en matière de milieu urbain, mais servirait aussi en même temps les objectifs "académiques" conventionnels de l'éducation d'une manière bien plus efficace, en utilisant les expériences auto-motivées de l'enfant comme tremplin pour l'acquisition de connaissances et de compétences. Les valeurs "enfance" et "milieu" doivent être intégrées au plan pédagogique dans le développement d'une culture "terre-à-terre" plus substantielle, mû par une "politique de l'expérience".

Mais toutes les expériences ne sont pas égales "dans l'état actuel du monde", notamment au plan de la vie locale des enfants. C'est pourquoi, parallèlement, les responsables de l'aménagement et du réaménagement urbains doivent se soucier de comprendre les valeurs environnementales que recherchent les jeunes dans leur milieu - des valeurs qu'il faut préserver ou prévoir dans les nouveaux aménagements, et volontairement recréer dans les cadres urbains existants. Nous avons beaucoup de chemin à faire avant que la majorité des jeunes aient quotidiennement accès à des milieux urbains convenablement diversifiés.

Il va sans dire que l'enfant lui-même doit être associé à la prise des décisions à tous les paliers: aussi bien d'une manière directe à des aspects précis de la planification et de l'aménagement, qu'à un processus pédagogique suivi. L'un est le complément de l'autre. Le réaménagement du milieu urbain en fonction des besoins de l'enfant doit être l'oeuvre conjointe des enfants et des institutions pertinentes. Plusieurs "moyens d'action" pour planifier et aménager en collaboration avec l'enfant ont été mis au point, mais on commence seulement à les utiliser dans le processus d'éducation, au sein et en dehors de l'école. Pour que l'action soit efficace, les établissements pédagogiques, les administrations urbaines, les organisations non-gouvernementales, les communautés locales et les enfants doivent apprendre à collaborer afin de pouvoir commencer à façonner un nouveau futur pour l'homme et sa planète.

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L'ENFANT EN TANT QU'AMENAGEUR URBAIN:
FAIRE DE SOLUTIONS ORIGINALES DES DEMARCHES RENOUVELABLES

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I. INTRODUCTION

L'enfant, l'espace urbain et l'aménagement visant à les rapprocher ont fait l'objet de discussions approfondies depuis une dizaine d'années. Les adultes intéressés se sont entendus à un point inhabituel sur les critères de base qui devraient permettre l'intégration de l'enfant dans le milieu urbain. Il n'est toutefois pas surprenant qu'un certain nombre d'hypothèses d'adulte ne cadrent pas automatiquement avec la façon dont l'enfant perçoit la ville (Jacobs et Derevensky, 1976).

Les recherches sur le milieu urbain, comme celles sur l'enfant, indiquent que tout un ensemble de critères d'aménagement n'ont pas été intégrés au processus des décisions urbaines. L'écart qui en résulte entre les mesures couramment perçues comme valables pour assurer l'intégration urbaine de l'enfant et les gestes officiellement faits en faveur de l'enfant se trouve aggravé par la facilité avec laquelle les solutions officielles, comme le terrain de jeux de quartier, peuvent être répétées. Cela contraste avec les solutions de rechange (expérimentales, manifestement inédites et efficaces) au type de milieu urbain officiellement admis pour l'enfant, qui n'ont généralement pas été reprises par ailleurs.

On avance que le passage d'une stratégie d'aménagement urbain fondée sur des solutions identifiables et renouvelables à une stratégie axée sur un processus d'aménagement susceptible de déboucher sur des solutions variables, mais adaptées, peut se faire par l'introduction de deux facteurs critiques: une planification ouverte et un cadre institutionnel permanent qui vont assurer l'expérience et la formation nécessaires à l'intégration progressive de la communauté des enfants, et de la communauté de l'enfant, au processus de l'aménagement urbain.

II. CRITERES DE PLANIFICATION EXTRAPOLES DE LA RECHERCHE

Un projet de recherche en deux temps, mené à Montréal, a eu pour but de:

1. étudier la façon dont les enfants urbains et suburbains perçoivent leur milieu;

2. déterminer s'il est possible d'entraîner des adultes à percevoir le milieu de l'enfant urbain à peu près de la même façon que ce dernier.

Les conclusions de l'étude peuvent servir d'éléments de planification pour assurer l'intégration de l'enfant dans le milieu urbain.

a) Sujets

On a pris pour sujets 132 élèves d'écoles élémentaires et secondaires de Montréal et de la banlieue. Ils étaient âgés de 5 à 17 ans, la moyenne d'âge atteignant 10 ans et trois mois. Le groupe urbain comptait 33 garçons et 44 filles, le groupe suburbain 26 garçons et 29 filles.

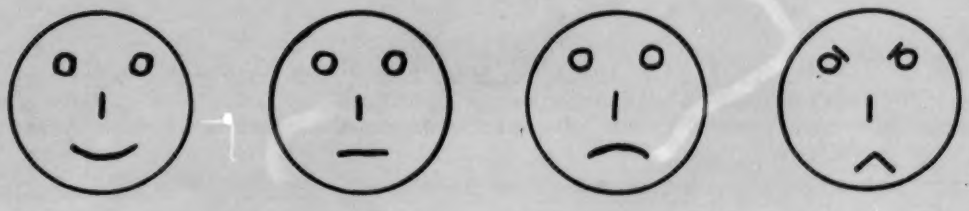
Les adultes retenus pour l'étude étaient inscrits à des cours de l'Université Concordia de Montréal. Ils se répartissaient en deux groupes distincts: ceux avec une formation restreinte dans le domaine du milieu urbain (un cours universitaire théorique sans expérience pratique; au nombre de 23) et ceux avec une formation poussée (un cours spécial sur l'enfance urbaine, avec recherche pratique et affectation à l'appui; au nombre de 23).

b) Outils de travail

On a mis au point un questionnaire détaillé pour déterminer comment l'enfant perçoit son milieu. Au travers des questions, on a cherché à découvrir ses intérêts, ses réactions face au milieu et sa conception du foyer, du quartier, de la famille et des divertissements collectifs de son âge, c'est-à-dire son mode de vie en général.

On a notamment posé sept questions permettant à l'enfant d'exprimer d'une manière non verbale ses sentiments à propos du milieu. Il a été amené à y répondre en entourant d'un cercle le symbole traduisant le mieux son point de vue (illustration 1). On lui a donné environ une heure pour répondre au questionnaire.

ILLUSTRATION 1. SYMBOLES D'EXPRESSION DES SENTIMENTS



c) Modalités

On a fait remplir individuellement le questionnaire à chaque enfant et enregistré ses réponses d'un signe de la tête. A la fin du semestre, on a soumis le même questionnaire aux deux groupes d'adultes inscrits aux deux types de cours différents, en leur demandant d'y répondre comme le ferait à leur avis un enfant urbain. Voilà pour le recueil des données.

d) Résultats

Les résultats de l'étude qui concernent la façon dont l'enfant perçoit le cadre de vie extérieur peuvent être combinés en quatre grands principes (1 à 4) et ceux de l'expérience avec les adultes nous amènent à la conclusion (5) que les solutions préconçues empêchent les changements.

1. L'intégration de l'enfant dans le milieu urbain suppose des accommodements communautaires. Quand une communauté met l'accent sur des critères économiques d'aménagement plutôt que sur les besoins de l'enfant, la faculté d'intégration de l'enfant dans le grand courant des activités se trouve amenuisée. Ainsi, quand les conseils scolaires suburbains de l'agglomération montréalaise ont opté pour la construction d'écoles intégrées, tous les élèves de la banlieue éloignée ont été forcés de se rendre en autobus scolaire jusqu'à l'établissement désigné. Notre étude révèle que 44% des enfants suburbains sont transportés par autobus à l'école, contre 17% des enfants urbains (tableau 1). A notre avis, la discontinuité spatiale qui en résulte empêche l'intégration de l'enfant dans la communauté et le prive du milieu accessible, proche et maîtrisable dont il a besoin.

TABLEAU 1. POURCENTAGE DES REPONSES A LA QUESTION: COMMENT ALLEZ-VOUS A L'ECOLE?

REPONSES	URBAINS	SUBURBAINS
Bicyclette	0	3.6
A pied	66.2	34.5
Covoiturage	2.6	12.7
Autobus scolaire	16.9	43.6
Autobus municipal	9.1	5.5

2. Le jeu dépend de l'accessibilité, de la proximité et de la maîtrise du milieu. Un certain nombre d'études sur l'enfance et les loisirs (Gold, 1972; Ward, 1978; Pollowy, 1977) indiquent qu'un accès facile et la proximité par rapport au foyer sont des conditions déterminantes pour qu'une installation récréative serve efficacement au jeu.

L'étude révèle qu'en réponse à la question sur leurs endroits de jeux, 67% des enfants suburbains et 45% des enfants urbains ont cité principalement des lieux proches de chez eux (arrière-cour, route, rue, promenade, passage). Ces espaces de jeux non structurés donnent à l'enfant une certaine emprise sur le milieu et le loisir de choisir ses jeux. Ils permettent l'intimité et l'isolement, sujets dont nous allons parler dans la partie suivante.

L'étude montre que seulement 10% des enfants suburbains et 20% des enfants urbains ont cité le parc comme leur principal lieu de jeux. Ils préféraient des possibilités de jeu dynamiques plutôt que statiques, leur permettant de dominer et de manipuler le milieu.

3. La possibilité perçue de changements est nécessaire à la participation. Les politiques et les programmes qui empêchent l'enfant et l'adulte de participer comme il se doit aux décisions suscitent un sentiment d'impuissance et un désintéressement. Quand on a demandé aux enfants ce qu'ils aimeraient avoir de plus dans leur communauté, ils ont été dans les deux cas les plus nombreux à répondre "je ne sais pas" (voir tableau 2). Peut-être que le fait de les tenir couramment à l'écart des décisions leur a donné le sentiment qu'ils ne peuvent rien changer et qu'il ne vaut donc pas la peine de se poser la question. La littérature publiée s'accorde à dire que nous leur avons enlevé tout sentiment d'emprise sur le milieu et donné l'impression qu'ils ne peuvent pas peser sur la politique officielle, les programmes et l'aménagement.

TABLEAU 2. POURCENTAGE DES REPONSES A LA QUESTION: QU'AIMERIEZ-VOUS AVOIR DANS VOTRE COMMUNAUTE?

REPONSES	URBAINS	SUBURBAINS
Davantage de parcs	5.2	7.3
Centres récréatifs	11.7	1.8
Ne sait pas	16.9	18.2
Piscine	11.7	12.7
Centre sportif	7.8	2.4

4. La mobilité est essentielle à la croissance et au développement. Le milieu urbain est riche dans sa complexité d'agencement et de fonctionnement, et offre à l'enfant tout un ensemble de possibilités d'exploration. Pour profiter de ses ressources, on doit l'utiliser pleinement.

Le confinement à certains secteurs donne une vision fragmentaire du monde plus vaste. L'importante communauté d'immigrants du noyau urbain de Montréal en est une illustration. Une question sur les moyens de

déplacement a révélé que 80% des enfants urbains avaient pris l'avion pour visiter leur "pays d'origine", tandis que 64% seulement d'entre eux avaient emprunté le métro en ville.

5. Les solutions préconçues empêchent les changements. Le tableau 3 indique la réponse des adultes et des enfants urbains à la question sur ce que pense l'enfant de l'endroit où il vit. Les renseignements démontrent que les adultes avec une formation poussée ont répondu de la manière cadrant le plus étroitement avec celle des enfants urbains. Le tableau 4 montre les réponses des trois catégories de sujets à la question sur ce que pense l'enfant des possibilités récréatives en ville.

TABLEAU 3. POURCENTAGE DES REPONSES A LA QUESTION 1: L'ENDROIT OU VIT L'ENFANT

REPONSES				
Pas de formation	17.4	65.2	13.0	4.3
Formation	65.0	30.0	4.3	0
Enfant urbain	66.0	23.0	3.0	6.5

TABLEAU 4. POURCENTAGE DES REPONSES A LA QUESTION 7: POSSIBILITES RECREATIVES

REPONSES				
Pas de formation	34.4	26.1	26.8	8.7
Formation	30.4	26.1	34.8	8.7
Enfant urbain	57.1	19.5	13.0	10.4

On peut constater que ni les adultes avec une formation, ni ceux sans formation, n'ont réussi à percevoir à peu près comme l'enfant les possibilités récréatives. Il en a été ainsi dans toutes les questions sur les loisirs, les parcs et les terrains de jeux.

Les adultes semblent avoir une idée préconçue du bon et de la nécessité des parcs et des terrains de jeux; ils paraissent avoir du mal à envisager les loisirs sous l'angle de l'enfant. Pour que l'enfant soit satisfait des loisirs, il est impérieux de lui permettre de les organiser en fonction des besoins qu'il ressent. Nous autres, les adultes, pouvons avoir à lui servir d'avocats, mais il n'est pas bon que "nous aménagions les aires de jeux simplement en pensant à l'enfant".

III. FAIRE DE SOLUTIONS ORIGINALES DES DEMARCHES RENOUVELABLES

a) Planifier pour changer

Le mécanisme proposé à l'appui de démarches susceptibles d'étayer le consensus théorique exposé ici est appelé le processus de planification. Ce processus élimine les obstacles institutionnels et idéologiques au transfert de l'information de l'intéressé (l'enfant et la communauté) au fournisseur des aménagements voulus (le gouvernement et ses experts-conseils).

Le processus de planification est destiné à intégrer un large éventail de théories interdisciplinaires et, notamment, de facteurs spatiaux, comportementaux et sociaux qui, considérés isolément, ne peuvent conduire qu'à une vision faussée ou incomplète des conditions nécessaires à la bonne compréhension d'un problème d'aménagement.

La recherche décrite dans cet exposé peut servir à arrêter des critères d'efficacité et d'aménagement pour assurer l'intégration de l'enfant dans le milieu urbain. Notamment, si l'efficacité d'un cadre de jeu est une question d'accessibilité, de proximité, d'emprise et de continuité spatiale du point de vue de l'enfant dans la ville, nous n'avons plus alors qu'à définir le poids relatif de ces critères pour communiquer un ensemble de lignes de conduite au fournisseur d'un service voulu. De plus, de tels critères offrent à l'usager un ensemble de moyens durables pour évaluer une gamme de projets avancés par l'institution organisatrice et les experts-conseils qui l'appuient.

Le processus de planification est également un moyen de recommandation valable, lorsque le service proposé et le processus par lequel il doit être obtenu sont avancés par le groupe intéressé ou pour son compte. De même, le consensus théorique sur les fonctions du jeu, les moyens à l'appui nécessaires, le besoin d'indépendance, de responsabilité et d'une certaine emprise sur le cadre de jeu, peut servir à orienter l'aménageur tout en permettant d'évaluer un large éventail de projets susceptibles de germer.

La clé du règlement des problèmes par le biais de la planification, toutefois, réside dans la fourniture simultanée de directives d'aménagement pour toutes sortes de conditions sociales, comportementales et spatiales, et de moyens d'évaluer les solutions et les démarches découlant du processus d'aménagement.

Le développement de compétences de planification en matière de formulation de directives et d'évaluation des suites données suppose un cadre institutionnel permanent. Dans la mesure où il est considéré comme un membre à part entière de la communauté, l'enfant doit avoir la même possibilité (ou à peu près) que l'adulte de manipuler son milieu aux niveaux d'intervention qui conviennent. Si au cours de son développement l'enfant est appelé à aiguiser les compétences voulues pour dépasser la conception statique associée aux solutions préconçues, il doit apprendre, par la pratique, à exercer une certaine emprise sur les démarches qui servent à créer de nouveaux aménagements.

b) Apprendre à exercer une emprise sur les démarches pour modifier le milieu

Le développement des aptitudes de l'enfant à exprimer les besoins ressentis relativement au milieu, et à susciter des changements, suppose une compréhension de la théorie et une expérience de l'application pratique par le biais de l'expérimentation. Le meilleur moyen d'y arriver est au travers du système scolaire: des cours sur la modification du milieu pourraient être inscrits au programme scolaire à tous les niveaux d'études. Nous proposons d'instituer ce genre d'éducation tout au long de la scolarité élémentaire et secondaire, en l'adaptant au degré de compréhension et d'aptitude de l'élève.

Cette éducation pourrait être inaugurée au niveau primaire, où l'élève serait chargé d'organiser son propre cadre d'apprentissage et incité à modifier les structures qu'il ne juge pas commodes ou plus valables. Cette liberté de changer le cadre donnerait à l'enfant le sentiment d'avoir prise sur le milieu physique environnant et de pouvoir le manipuler à tous moments. Les expériences avec le milieu conduisent à une meilleure compréhension des causes et des effets, et sensibilisent l'enfant à la corrélation qu'il y a entre lui et son cadre de vie.

A mi-chemin de la scolarité élémentaire, on pourrait charger l'élève d'aménager le terrain de jeux scolaire sur une base annuelle et saisonnière. On mettrait l'accent sur le caractère annuel et saisonnier de l'aménagement car les besoins, les intérêts et les conceptions varient avec chaque nouvelle fournée d'élèves et les installations de jeux doivent cadrer avec les intérêts dynamiques de la communauté scolaire. On pourrait peut-être s'assurer les services d'un aménageur moyennant rémunération, pour aider les élèves à apporter les changements qu'ils souhaitent (Clay, 1972).

Dans les écoles secondaires, un programme d'études correspondant au niveau de connaissances de l'élève porterait sur l'aspect théorique des grands principes d'aménagement, pour expliquer où, quand, comment et pourquoi l'aménagement revêt certaines formes (relation entre la forme et la fonction). La partie pratique du cours consisterait à faire des expériences à l'extérieur dans les vastes terrains de jeux vides de l'école.

Un important aspect de ce programme d'études est celui de l'orientation par laquelle l'enfant apprend:

a) ses droits juridiques;

b) la façon de les protéger;

c) la façon d'exploiter pleinement le système bureaucratique au service de l'intérêt public;

d) la façon de passer par-dessus et de recourir directement aux média quand la filière officielle ne donne rien;

e) les systèmes servant à préserver les aménagements dans l'intérêt public.

L'inscription de ce genre de cours au programme scolaire va donner à l'enfant le sentiment très important de pouvoir influer sur son milieu, en lui permettant de comprendre comment ce dernier se forme et se modifie, sans compromettre les futurs changements inévitables.

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L'INITIATIVE DU "REPERTOIRE URBAIN GLOBAL": DES ELEVES EVALUENT LEUR MILIEU URBAIN

par Fred Hill et Martha Friendly

Projet "Child in the City"
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Quiconque se soucie de la santé et du bien-être général de l'enfant urbain au Canada doit être sensible à l'importance des changements rapides survenus ces dernières années dans son environnement. Que les choses évoluent n'est bien entendu pas nouveau en soi; cependant, l'enfant vit maintenant dans des conditions sans précédent. Il y a 25 ans encore, on ne connaissait pas au Canada le faubourg à grands immeubles, par exemple. Les banlieues étaient essentiellement habitées par des familles avec enfants vivant dans des maisons individuelles, et le centre d'achats, que la jeunesse de maintenant aime tant fréquenter, n'existait pas. Le tissu urbain était avant tout, pour le meilleur ou pour le pire, l'héritage d'un aménagement anarchique. Le plus bizarre, toutefois, est que l'on ne sait actuellement pas grand' chose de la façon dont ces changements et les autres récemment intervenus dans le milieu urbain ont influé sur l'existence de l'enfant, ou, à cet égard, dont les différences de conditions entre quartiers se reflètent au niveau du bien-être général des enfants qui y vivent et de la manière dont ils passent leur temps. Point n'est besoin d'être un déterministe convaincu en matière d'environnement pour affirmer que le fait de vivre dans un petit pavillon ou un grand immeuble, à côté d'une piscine ou d'un établissement de jeux, avec un arrêt d'autobus à sa porte ou à 15 minutes de marche, aura un effet important sur la vie de l'enfant.

L'initiative du répertoire urbain global, lancée par les responsables du Projet "Child in the City" (l'enfant et la ville), vise à découvrir certaines des répercussions du milieu urbain sur l'existence de l'enfant. Dans quel genre de milieu élevons-nous l'enfant, et qu'est-ce que celui-ci en pense? Comment l'enfant vivant dans un quartier défavorisé du point de vue des services et des transports passe-t-il son temps? Est-ce différemment d'un enfant de même condition habitant un quartier mieux desservi?

On a mis au point une méthode pour avant tout tenter de connaître le milieu de l'enfant, savoir ce qu'il en pense et se renseigner sur les diverses manières dont il passe son temps. Grâce au concours des conseils scolaires de la métropole de Toronto, nous avons amené deux groupes d'élèves du secondaire à évaluer leur cadre de vie urbain. Tout d'abord, quelque 3000 élèves suivant des cours de géographie urbaine, principalement de douzième année, ont mené à bien un travail de recherche de deux semaines, au cours duquel ils ont recueilli des données pour le projet. Chaque équipe de deux élèves s'est vue charger d'un secteur composé de quelques pâtés de maisons. Elles ont fait l'inventaire des services, installations,

aménagements et possibilités offerts aux enfants et aux adolescents. Cela a notamment inclu les restaurants, certains types de magasins, les établissements de jeux, les salles de billard, les installations et les clubs de sport, les centres communautaires, les endroits où prendre des leçons, les paroisses, les écoles, les lieux de divertissement, les installations récréatives, les endroits où jouent les enfants, et les dangers. Les élèves ont non seulement répertorié les installations, services, programmes, etc., mais aussi jugé dans quelle mesure ils répondent aux besoins de l'enfant; ils ont en outre évalué chaque quartier sous l'angle du milieu de l'enfant, et suggéré des améliorations pour mieux répondre à ses besoins.

Chaque équipe s'est vue remettre une trousse d'information comprenant une carte à grande échelle du secteur confié. Elle y a consigné chaque indication relevée durant l'inventaire. Nous comptions établir, d'après toutes ces données et des inventaires complémentaires, ce que nous avions prévu d'appeler le Répertoire urbain global. Ce répertoire allait être utile pour la communauté et l'on prévoyait que les renseignements serviraient à divers types d'analyses et d'exposés.

Même si l'initiative a été un excellent exercice pédagogique, et si certaines des informations et observations sont pénétrantes et révélatrices, les données recueillies par les élèves se sont avérées trop confuses pour permettre d'établir un répertoire urbain vraiment complet ou d'analyser systématiquement la répartition des ressources à la disposition de l'enfant. On pourrait probablement répéter l'expérience avec plus de succès si on la menait sur une bien plus petite échelle, en prenant pour participants des élèves et des professeurs reconnus pour leur compétence, et en donnant aux chercheurs un contrôle plus direct sur le processus de recueil des données. Comme la qualité des renseignements obtenus était très variable, nous avons été obligés, pour établir le répertoire, d'exploiter principalement les autres sources d'information disponibles, en utilisant les inventaires et les cartes des élèves comme documents d'appui.

Il ne fait pas de doute que certaines installations sont plus répandues, plus équitablement réparties que d'autres, et certains quartiers mieux pourvus que d'autres. Mais qu'est-ce que cela veut dire pour l'enfant? Cela signifie-t-il que l'enfant d'un quartier où les installations récréatives sont rares passe son temps au centre d'achats et s'attirent des ennuis, ou bien qu'il va ailleurs et fait les mêmes choses que celui qui dispose d'installations récréatives près de chez lui? S'il ne vit pas près d'un parc ou d'une piscine, en arrive-t-il à ne pas aller très souvent dans un parc ou une piscine?

Pour répondre à ces questions, nous utilisons les résultats de la deuxième phase de l'initiative: un long questionnaire rempli par quelque 10 000 élèves de 9e année et nous renseignant sur la façon dont ils exploitent les installations et les possibilités offertes dans leurs quartiers et ailleurs. Nous espérons être en mesure de démontrer l'effet des différences dans les particularités des quartiers, notamment dans les installations et les possibilités offertes, sur la manière dont les adolescents passent leur temps.

Nous sommes naturellement conscients que bien d'autres facteurs, en dehors du milieu physique, influent sur ce que fait l'enfant. Ainsi, qu'un enfant joue ou non au tennis ou au bowling pourrait être plus une question de condition sociale et d'origine ethnique que d'accès à un club de tennis ou de bowling. Notre questionnaire demande donc tout un ensemble de renseignements sur le milieu familial; nous posons également des questions sur le type d'habitation, la façon dont est perçu le quartier, la connaissance des ressources et des possibilités offertes par la ville, les changements d'habitation et les craintes éprouvées dans le quartier et ailleurs à Toronto, dans l'idée qu'il existe également une relation entre tous ces facteurs et les activités de l'adolescent.

Quant aux activités proprement dites, notre questionnaire se penche sur la plupart de celles auxquelles est suceptible de s'adonner un élève de 9e année en dehors de l'école. Malheureusement, comme ce questionnaire a été soumis par le biais de l'école, nous n'avons pas pu poser de questions sur la consommation d'alcool, l'usage de la drogue, les pratiques sexuelles ou la délinquance, bien que certains élèves s'arrangent inévitablement pour nous laisser entendre que ces activités occupent une place importante dans leur vie. La liste des activités couvertes dans notre questionnaire n'en reste pas moins relativement complète, incluant: faire ses devoirs; lire; regarder la télévision; faire du bénévolat; passer du temps dans des parcs et des terrains de jeux; passer du temps dans des rues, sur des trottoirs, dans des allées et dans des parcs de stationnement; se rendre dans des bibliothèques publiques; magasiner et faire les magasins; jouer au billard et au billard électrique; manger dans des restaurants et des "rapide service"; aller dans des discothèques; aller voir des films et danser; aller à des concerts, à des représentations musicales, à des spectacles sur scène, dans des musées, à des expositions et dans des galeries d'art; assister à des compétitions sportives; faire du sport; fréquenter des clubs; prendre des leçons; aller à la messe; rendre visite à des parents et des amis; travailler à temps partiel; assumer des responsabilités à la maison; prendre des vacances.

La plupart de ces activités dépendent des installations fournies par l'Etat, ou bien par le secteur privé dans le cadre des contraintes et des structures imposées par les paliers municipaux et supérieurs. Pour la majorité d'entre elles, nous allons savoir dans quelle mesure, à quel endroit et avec qui les élèves s'y adonnent, comment ils vont les exercer et jusqu'à quel point ils aiment les pratiquer. Nous avons également demandé à chaque élève ce qu'il aime et déteste le plus dans son quartier, et ce qu'il aimerait trouver dans les choses qui n'existent pas.

En étudiant ces données d'un point de vue géographique (c'est-à-dire, par quartier) et individuel, nous allons pouvoir cerner les divers facteurs expliquant les différences entre quartiers et individus dans la façon dont les enfants passent leur temps. Nous considérons ce genre de renseignements utile pour la prise des décisions d'orientation et d'aménagement au niveau général. Nous croyons plus particulièrement que la façon dont l'enfant passe son temps a à voir avec bien des problèmes propres à la jeunesse: non-réalisation de son potentiel, aliénation, abus de drogue et d'alcool, maladies physiques et mentales mêmes. Les secteurs public et privé réagissent

en retour en fonction de ces problèmes et de la façon dont l'enfant passe son temps, et ce faisant, modifient l'éventail des possibilités offertes dans divers quartiers - et le processus se poursuit. Ainsi donc, dans la mesure où les possibilités offertes par le milieu influent sur le choix des activités de l'enfant, plus nous en saurons sur cette relation, mieux nous serons en mesure de trouver des solutions d'ensemble à ces problèmes et de corriger les déséquilibres de manière à éviter ce que Kevin Lynch a appelé la "privation d'expériences"[1] de l'enfant.

A la lumière de cette étude, nous allons formuler une série de recommandations sur la façon dont peut être amélioré l'environnement de l'enfance et de la jeunesse de façon à mieux répondre à leurs besoins, ce après avoir démontré quels sont ses effets. Il pourra s'agir de recommandations très précises (comme enlever le verre cassé d'un terrain vague où jouent des enfants) ou bien plus générales (comme modifier la législation ou les règlements afin de prendre en considération les besoins de l'enfant dans l'urbanisme).

Cette initiative a permis à des milliers d'adolescents de participer à l'étude de leur milieu urbain par divers biais: en fournissant les renseignements dont nous avons besoin pour connaître certains des effets provoqués en construisant les villes et les banlieues comme nous le faisons; en suggérant des changements et des améliorations précises; et en faisant connaître leur opinion sur leurs quartiers aux décisionnaires, par le biais de la divulgation de nos résultats. En échange, les élèves qui ont fait l'inventaire avec les cartes ont participé à une expérience que la vaste majorité a appelée "l'un des meilleurs projets réalisés à l'école cette année". Bien qu'elle ait quelque peu déçu nos attentes en ne s'avérant pas un moyen de recueillir des renseignements fiables, l'expérience qui a consisté à associer des enfants à l'évaluation de leur milieu n'en reste pas moins une contribution - que nous espérons utile - au processus de décision et d'aménagement, de la part d'une ressource sous-exploitée.

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[1] Kevin Lynch, Growing Up in Cities, M.I.T. Press et UNESCO, 1977, p. 24.

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LES ESPACES LIBRES POUR ENFANTS DANS LA METROPOLE DE BANGKOK

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ces dernières années, Bangkok, la capitale de la Thaïlande, a progressivement cessé d'être une localité rurale pour devenir une grande ville moderne, de type conventionnel. Les changements survenus dans ses structures fonctionnelles et socio-économiques, notamment après la Deuxième guerre mondiale, ont fortement attiré les ruraux vers la capitale. Cet afflux est largement responsable de l'accroissement démographique de 4,5% par an que connaît Bangkok, et qui met à contribution les services urbains essentiels, notamment dans le domaine du logement. Il semble que la ville soit incapable de faire face à la demande. La plus grave conséquence est son extension, qui pose bien des problèmes de milieu urbain, dont le manque d'espaces libres - le principal sujet de cet exposé.

J'aborderai ici le problème des espaces libres à Bangkok, particulièrement sous l'angle de l'enfant, et tenterai d'avancer des moyens d'améliorer la situation. J'espère favoriser par là, dans les cercles d'experts, un débat international qui permettra d'arrêter des principes et des démarches plus judicieux, en vue du règlement du problème des espaces libres à Bangkok.

II. LA METROPOLE DE BANGKOK

Avant de passer au problème des espaces libres, je donnerai quelques renseignements fondamentaux sur Bangkok.

a) Particularités géographiques

La métropole de Bangkok s'étend sur une plaine alluviale plane, d'une superficie d'environ 1568,7 km^2. Le site n'est qu'à environ 1,2 m au-dessus du niveau de la mer, ce qui pose un sérieux problème de drainage. Dans le passé, Bangkok était sillonnée d'un grand nombre de canaux artificiels (des "klongs" en thaïlandais), servant à l'irrigation et au drainage du sol. Avec l'extension de la ville, on a comblé la plupart de ces klongs pour construire des routes; malheureusement, on ne les a pas remplacés par des systèmes de drainage efficaces. C'est pourquoi la plupart des quartiers de la ville se retrouvent longtemps inondés après de fortes pluies. Le sous-sol est fait d'argile marine molle, et retient la nappe phréatique très en surface. Il faut donc construire sur pilotis et avec de solides fondations, ce qui rend tout aménagement très coûteux.

b) Démographie

D'après le dernier recensement (1978), Bangkok compte 4,8 millions d'habitants, c'est-à-dire 11% de toute la population thaïlandaise. En fait, la population de Bangkok est probablement plus importante que cela, car un très grand nombre de migrants ruraux ne se sont sûrement pas fait recenser. A l'heure actuelle, elle s'accroît à un rythme de l'ordre de 4,5% par an; dans ce taux, les naissances entrent pour 2,3% et les arrivées de ruraux pour 2,2%. Environ 30% des habitants ont moins de 14 ans. La plupart des enfants appartiennent à des familles à faible et moyen revenu. D'après les estimations, il y a en moyenne 2 enfants, et six personnes, par famille à Bangkok.

c) Profil urbain

En ce qui concerne le profil urbain, la métropole de Bangkok peut être considérée comme une agglomération à multiples noyaux. Du point de vue administratif, la ville est divisée en 24 arrondissements ayant chacun leur propre noyau, formé de boutiques contiguës et de centres d'achats. La densité démographique et le degré d'urbanisation varient d'un arrondissement à l'autre. Les arrondissements périphériques conservent encore le caractère de localités rurales et leur densité démographique est tout aussi faible, tandis que ceux du centre sont complètement urbanisés et fortement peuplés.

Par suite du manque de planification et de réglementation de l'usage de la superficie, divers genres d'aménagements se côtoient dans chaque arrondissement. Cette anarchie est largement responsable de bien des problèmes graves que connaît la ville, comme l'encombrement de la circulation, la pollution du milieu et la pénurie de logements et d'espaces libres. Dans les zones complètement urbanisées, la situation s'est détériorée au point de paraître irrémédiable. Le mieux que puisse faire la municipalité est uniquement prévenir les nouveaux problèmes et empêcher une aggravation de la situation. Il faudrait un investissement colossal pour régler complètement les problèmes urbains existant à Bangkok.

III. L'ESPACE URBAIN

a) Disponibilités actuelles

A l'heure actuelle, 0,09% seulement de toute la superficie urbaine est de l'espace libre, public, utilisé à des fins récréatives. Ce chiffre représente 1 km^2 par 4 000 000 d'habitants et est donc très loin de la norme de 1 km^2 par 70 000 habitants, qu'a prévue l'Administration métropolitaine de Bangkok (A.M.B.). L'espace libre public à Bangkok consiste en une superficie totale de 100 hectares, divisée entre cinq parcs publics, un jardin zoologique, une poignée de parcs miniatures et 23 terrains de jeux pour enfants, tous aménagés par l'A.M.B., ainsi que diverses aires récréatives fournies par des constructeurs-promoteurs privés. Il est donc clair qu'il y a une grave pénurie d'espaces libres et que la situation ne va cesser d'empirer avec l'accroissement de la population.

b) Besoins actuels

Il va sans dire que le besoin d'espaces libres joue aussi bien chez l'adulte que chez l'enfant. Néanmoins, je me concentrerai ici sur le problème de l'aménagement d'espaces libres pour l'enfant: son développement est la clé des ressources humaines de la nation.

Les enfants de Bangkok peuvent être classés en trois grandes catégories, suivant le revenu de leurs parents: ceux de familles à revenu faible, ceux de familles à revenu moyen et ceux de familles à revenu élevé. Sur le 1,4 million d'enfants que compte Bangkok, 600 000 appartiennent à des familles à revenu faible et les autres 800 000 à des familles à revenu moyen et élevé. Bien entendu, ces trois catégories d'enfants ont besoin d'espaces libres, principalement pour jouer. Toutefois, leur besoin dépend entièrement de leur milieu socio-économique, qui détermine en échange le temps qu'ils ont pour jouer et l'accès qu'ils ont à des espaces libres.

La plupart des enfants de familles à faible revenu vivent dans des communautés marginales. Entre l'âge de 6 et 14 ans, ils doivent aller à l'école. Ils ont là l'occasion de jouer durant les pauses du matin et du midi. Après la classe, la majorité d'entre eux doivent aider leur famille en arrondissant le revenu familial. Ils n'ont donc pas autant de temps pour jouer que les enfants de familles à revenu moyen et élevé. Quand ils en ont le loisir, ils vont généralement jouer dans l'endroit le plus proche et le plus accessible, notamment sur le terrain du monastère ou sur le trottoir. Seul un petit nombre d'entre eux profite des terrains de jeux aménagés par l'A.M.B. car ils sont peu répandus.

Les enfants de familles à revenu moyen et élevé ont plus facilement accès à des espaces libres; ils ont aussi plus le temps et l'occasion d'en profiter. Ils disposent de terrains de jeux à domicile, chez les voisins, dans les parcs communautaires de leurs quartiers, et dans le cadre de certaines installations commerciales (courts de tennis, piscines et terrains de foire, par exemple). La plupart des enfants de familles à revenu moyen ont suffisamment d'espace libre à domicile, tandis que presque tous ceux de familles à faible revenu doivent utiliser des endroits en dehors de chez eux, notamment des pelouses et des terrasses publiques.

c) Perspectives

On peut voir d'après ce que l'on vient de dire qu'il faudrait s'attacher avant toute chose à répondre au besoin d'espaces libres des enfants de familles à faible revenu. Consciente du problème, l'A.M.B. s'est expressément engagée, dans son plan d'aménagement de Bangkok pour 1977 à 1981, à offrir davantage d'espaces libres en ville. Le plan se décompose comme suit:

1. Projets à court terme

   a) améliorer la qualité des parcs et espaces libres dans 4 quartiers précis;

   b) aménager des petits parcs ou espaces verts dans les quartiers les plus peuplés de Bangkok;

c) aménager un centre d'entraînement sportif pour adolescents;

d) aider des organismes publics ou privés à aménager des espaces verts pour le public à Bangkok;

e) offrir des installations récréatives, comme des salles de musique ou des petites bibliothèques.

2. Projets à moyen terme

Mener à terme la construction du Parc Chatuchak, actuellement en cours.

3. Projets à long terme

Aménager 4 grands parcs autour de la ville.

Si ces objectifs sont atteints comme prévu, la situation en ce qui concerne les espaces libres à Bangkok devrait s'en trouver grandement améliorée.

IV. LE SYSTEME D'AMENAGEMENT D'ESPACES LIBRES POUR ENFANTS

a) Les facteurs

Vu dans une optique industrielle, le système d'aménagement d'espaces libres pour enfants à Bangkok peut se présenter comme dans l'illustration 1, qui montre qu'un tel aménagement met en jeu 4 grands facteurs. Chacun de ces facteurs mérite d'être pris soigneusement en considération.

ILLUSTRATION 1: SYSTEME D'AMENAGEMENT D'ESPACES LIBRES

1. Terrains disponibles: Le terrain à Bangkok est extrêmement coûteux. Il revient au moins à 300.000 dollars américains l'hectare. Lors de l'extension de la ville, on n'a pas réservé d'espaces libres, et le terrain est devenu la ressource la plus rare. Le coût de l'aménagement d'espaces libres va être astronomique s'il faut acheter le terrain au prix du marché. Avoir le terrain semble donc être la principale entrave à l'aménagement d'espaces libres à Bangkok.

2. Infrastructures: Une fois obtenu, le terrain doit satisfaire un minimum de normes. Cela suppose de l'aménager et de la remblayer, ainsi que de prévoir les infrastructures (routes d'accès, voies piétonnières, électricité, eau et système de drainage). Ces travaux vont faire considérablement augmenter l'investissement et parfois coûter plus cher que le terrain.

3. Autres ressources: L'aménagement d'espaces libres suppose en outre d'autres ressources, par exemple pour l'aménagement paysager et la fourniture d'installations annexes, comme l'équipement des terrains de jeux.

4. Gestion: La gestion, y compris la compétence technique, joue un rôle clé dans l'aménagement d'espaces libres, depuis la mise en route jusqu'à la réalisation et l'exploitation d'un projet.

De toute évidence, ces quatre grands facteurs doivent être pleinement intégrés, et assurés sur une grande échelle par le secteur public, représenté en l'occurrence par l'A.M.B. On peut donc partir du principe que l'A.M.B. doit être le principal aménageur d'espaces libres.

b) Les aménageurs

Bien que l'A.M.B. soit le principal aménageur d'espaces libres dans la métropole de Bangkok, il en existe d'autres de moindre envergure. Dans le secteur public, divers organismes gouvernementaux, monastères, temples, universités et écoles sont tous plus ou moins des aménageurs d'espaces libres. Dans le secteur privé, des organismes sociaux, des constructeurs-promoteurs et des particuliers le sont également. Il faut souligner la nécessité pour eux de coopérer et d'être intégrés dans un cadre commun. A cet égard, l'A.M.B. peut jouer un rôle de coordonnateur et devrait accorder son appui technique dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. L'illustration 2 est une représentation schématique des aménageurs et utilisateurs d'espaces libres pour le public à Bangkok.

c) Types d'aménagements

A Bangkok, il y a divers types d'aménagements ou d'espaces libres, que l'on peut classer à quatre niveaux:

1. L'espace libre municipal: terrains de jeux dans 5 parcs publics, le campus de l'université, un jardin zoologique, et deux centres récréatifs privés.
2. Le terrain de jeux d'arrondissement: 23 terrains de jeux et centres de jeunes autour de temples et d'écoles.

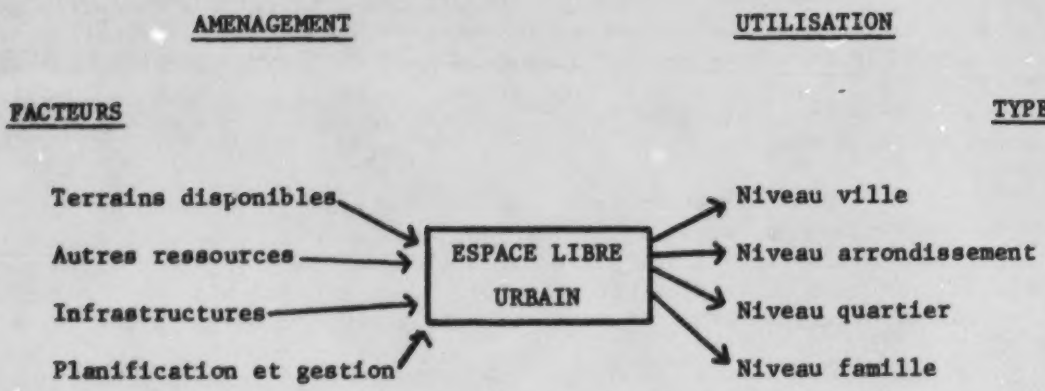

ILLUSTRATION 2. ESPACE LIBRE POUR ENFANTS A BANGKOK

3. Le terrain communautaire de quartier: Centre communautaire avec terrain de jeux dans communauté à faible revenu.
4. L'espace libre rattaché aux domiciles privés: En pratique, les domiciles privés de familles à revenu élevé ou moyen supérieur offrent de 30 à 70% de toute la superficie d'espace libre.

Ces niveaux sont représentés dans l'illustration 3. La taille, le type et le rôle des aménagements varient à chaque niveau.

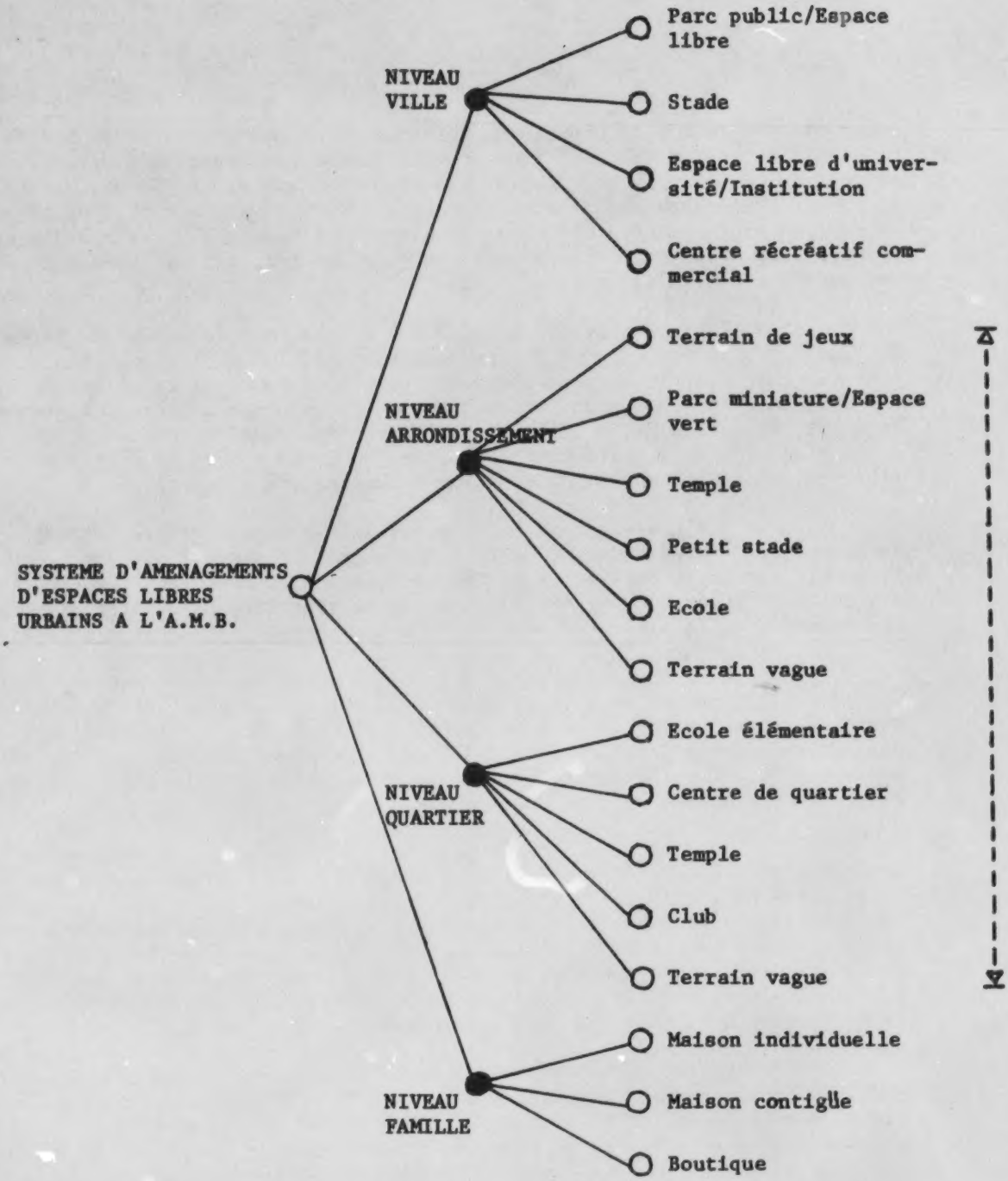

ILLUSTRATION 3. SYSTEME D'AMENAGEMENT D'ESPACES LIBRES A BANGKOK

V. LES PROBLEMES QUE POSE L'AMENAGEMENT D'ESPACES LIBRES

Les problèmes que pose l'aménagement d'espaces libres à Bangkok ne se limitent pas à la pénurie de terrains et au coût élevé de l'opération. La planification et les politiques ont également une importance vitale à cette fin. Dans le passé l'A.M.B., le principal aménageur d'espaces libres, s'est seulement attachée à satisfaire un besoin général au niveau de la ville et de l'arrondissement; mais comme l'aménagement d'espaces libres à ces deux niveaux suppose d'énormes ressources et bien des tractations, elle n'a pu en aménager que quelques-uns.

Pour les enfants âgés de 4 à 14 ans, l'aménagement de terrains de jeux et de petits espaces libres au niveau de l'arrondissement et du quartier est ce qu'il y a de plus souhaitable. C'est pourquoi la politique et les projets de l'A.M.B. consistant à aménager des espaces libres de grande envergure au niveau de la ville et de l'arrondissement ne semblent pas judicieux. Elle devrait s'attacher à aménager un grand nombre de petits espaces libres d'arrondissement et de quartier à travers toute la ville.

A l'heure actuelle, la superficie d'espaces libres aménagée au niveau de l'arrondissement reste inférieure à la norme fixée par l'A.M.B. Il semble que cette dernière n'ait pas à elle seule les moyens d'aménager des espaces libres à un rythme suffisant pour répondre aux besoins pressants. Par conséquent, le plein concours de tous les autres aménageurs s'impose.

Un autre point important est la norme de 1 km^2 d'espace libre par 70 000 habitants, qu'a fixée l'A.M.B. Pour l'atteindre, cette dernière devrait acheter 60 km^2 de plus de terrain; il en coûterait 1,8 milliards de dollars américains. Cet objectif n'est manifestement pas réaliste, quand on sait que l'A.M.B. affecte actuellement 4 millions de dollars américains à l'aménagement d'espaces libres.

Dans la mesure où le problème du terrain est la principale entrave à l'aménagement d'espaces libres à Bangkok, il faudrait se pencher sur la question de l'exploitation efficace de la superficie urbaine. Il semble qu'il y ait encore à Bangkok beaucoup de terrains vagues appartenant à des spéculateurs. La présence de deux champs de course et d'une prison en pleine ville ne semble pas constituer un usage efficace du terrain. Il faudrait étudier les possibilités offertes dans ces cas-là, même si les problèmes soulevés peuvent avoir de profondes répercussions politiques.

Enfin, on ne peut négliger la question de la participation du public à l'aménagement des espaces libres. C'est une question très importante dans la mesure où le milieu physique en général est en cause. Dans la plupart des espaces libres de Bangkok, les gens sèment des détritus qui les déparent et alourdissent le travail et les frais d'entretien.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Voici les grandes conclusions que l'on peut tirer:

1. La pénurie d'espaces libres pour les loisirs constitue l'un des principaux problèmes urbains à Bangkok. L'espace libre disponible ne représente actuellement que 0,09% de toute la superficie urbaine.

2. Il y a 1,4 million d'enfants à Bangkok, dont près de la moitié appartiennent à des familles à faible revenu; ces derniers ont davantage besoin d'espaces libres que ceux de familles à revenu moyen et élevé.

3. Le principal aménageur d'espaces libres est l'A.M.B., qui n'a actuellement pas les moyens de répondre convenablement aux besoins.

4. Les espaces libres aménagés par l'A.M.B. devraient l'être surtout au niveau de l'arrondissement et du quartier; celle-ci devrait s'attacher à doter les divers quartiers de Bangkok de petits espaces libres ou terrains de jeux.

5. Tous les aménageurs d'espaces libres, dont l'A.M.B., devraient collaborer à fond, coordonner et intégrer leurs efforts.

6. La pénurie de terrains est la principale entrave à l'aménagement d'espaces libres. Il faut donc se pencher étroitement sur la question de l'exploitation maximale et rationnelle de la superficie urbaine à Bangkok.

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LES CENTRES DE JEUNES DE L'ADMINISTRATION METROPOLITAINE DE BANGKOK

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Bangkok, Thaïlande

I. CONTEXTE

Par suite des changements socio-économiques et de l'essor démographique, certains jeunes d'aujourd'hui négligent leurs études pour s'adonner au jeu, à la drogue et à d'autres excès, et causent d'énormes soucis à leur famille, leur société et leur pays. Afin de prévenir et de surmonter ces problèmes, le ministère thaïlandais de l'Intérieur a conseillé à tous les gouverneurs provinciaux de mettre sur pied des centres récréatifs de jeunes pour inciter la jeunesse à utiliser constructivement son temps de loisirs. Et en 1960, l'Administration métropolitaine de Bangkok a construit trois centres récréatifs; elle a également doté en personnel et subventionné annuellement d'autres centres du même genre. En 1968, ces centres ont été regroupés, rebaptisés "centres de jeunes" et directement confiés à l'A.M.B. Le personnel fait partie de l'A.M.B., qui fournit également le budget.

II. OBJECTIFS

Les objectifs des centres récréatifs sont les suivants:

1. Servir de centres de loisirs, de façon à ce que les jeunes s'adonnent dans leur temps libre à des activités personnellement et socialement constructives;
2. Donner la possibilité de se divertir et de se détendre;
3. Eduquer et discipliner convenablement les jeunes en fonction de leur âge et de leur sexe, de façon à ce qu'ils développent une attitude et une personnalité leur permettant de s'adapter à la société;
4. Apprendre aux enfants à collaborer, à être de bons meneurs et de bons disciples dans le jeu démocratique, et à aider leur société et leur pays.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Les organes administratifs des centres de jeunes sont les suivants:

A. Le Comité de promotion des centres de jeunes, dont les membres sont nommés pour une période de deux ans par le gouverneur de l'A.M.B. Son rôle consiste à donner des conseils, à régler des problèmes, à mobiliser des fonds et des dons, et à trouver des volontaires.

B. La section des centres de jeunes et des terrains de jeux, division des Loisirs, Bureau du bien-être public, est chargée de mettre en oeuvre les politiques adoptées par le comité.

C. Le surveillant des services récréatifs est chargé de contrôler les activités des centres, de faire des recommandations à leur sujet, et de signaler les problèmes et les moyens d'y remédier dans des rapports au Bureau du bien-être public.

D. Préposés:

1. Le surveillant du centre s'occupe d'en vérifier et promouvoir les activités. Pour des questions pratiques, si le centre est situé dans l'enceinte d'une école, le directeur de l'école en est nommé le surveillant.

2. Le chef du centre est chargé de le faire fonctionner conformément à la politique gouvernementale, de superviser les responsables des activités, de tenir les registres de fournitures, et de coopérer avec d'autres services connexes.

3. Le chef adjoint, nommé par le chef en accord avec la division des Loisirs, épaule le chef et s'occupe du centre en son absence.

4. Le spécialiste du bien-être social est chargé de recruter de nouveaux membres, ainsi que de se pencher sur les problèmes des jeunes du coin et d'aider à y remédier.

5. Les animateurs de jeunes sont chargés d'organiser les activités, de superviser et d'instruire les participants. Ils comprennent des animateurs permanents, qui font partie du personnel régulier, des animateurs temporaires, qui sont spécialisés dans certaines disciplines, et des volontaires.

IV. FONCTIONNEMENT

A. Membres: Les membres doivent avoir entre 8 et 18 ans. Les postulants remplissent des formules de candidature et ont besoin du consentement de leurs parents et de leur directeur d'école. La cotisation se monte à 2 bahts.

B. Heures d'ouverture: Le centre est ouvert du mardi au samedi, entre 10 et 18 heures; il est fermé le dimanche, le lundi et les jours fériés.

C. Activités offertes:

1. Des programmes d'activité hebdomadaires et mensuels sont annoncés à l'avance. Ils incluent:

a) sports en plein air, comme basket-ball, football européen, volley-ball et badminton;

b) sports en salle, comme ping-pong et échecs;

c) sports d'auto-défense, comme boxe, escrime, karaté et judo;

d) musique, thaïlandaise et occidentale;

e) danse, classique thaïlandaise et folklorique;

f) présentations, y compris pièces de théâtre, conférences et discussions;

g) activités pédagogiques, comme excursions et classes d'anglais, de mathématiques et de dessin;

h) artisanat et diététique, y compris charpenterie, maçonnerie et cuisine;

i) cours de natation.

2. En outre, le centre

a) organise des camps d'été;

b) assure des services publics, pour aider par exemple le gouvernement, des groupements religieux et d'autres organismes.

3. Parmi les événements spéciaux, on peut citer:

a) la Journée nationale de l'enfant;

b) la Journée de Songkran;

c) la Journée sportive de la jeunesse;

d) des programmes d'expositions pour marquer des événements spéciaux, comme l'anniversaire du roi et celui de la création de la municipalité de Bangkok.

4. Des programmes de formation et des cycles d'études pour animateurs et volontaires sont également organisés.

D. Bien-être social: Le Centre fait également un travail d'assistance sociale pour aider les jeunes avec leurs problèmes personnels et familiaux. Le spécialiste en bien-être social joue le rôle suivant:

1. Il fait passer les entrevues aux candidats, explique les activités du centre et tient les dossiers;

2. Il aide les membres à se joindre aux activités qui leur plaisent;

3. Il orchestre les activités de groupe et aide chaque membre à s'intégrer;

4. Il résoud les problèmes individuels par le biais, par exemple, de consultations et de visites dans les foyers, et tient des dossiers sur les intéressés et l'assistance qu'ils reçoivent afin qu'ils puissent être facilement suivis;

5. Il communique avec d'autres services connexes à propos des problèmes des membres, notamment avec la division du bien-être social, le Centre de la santé publique, le ministère du Travail, la division du Bien-être de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, et des hôpitaux;

6. Il oriente l'éducation des membres;

7. Il fait connaître les activités du centre de manière à sensibiliser le public et mobiliser son soutien, et à rapprocher par exemple les familles des membres;

8. Il analyse et évalue les problèmes et les besoins des membres et de la communauté.

E. Finances: L'A.M.B. finance le personnel, l'équipement et l'entretien des centres de jeunes. Elle verse également des subventions pour des organismes et des cercles.

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L'EFFET DE LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE SUR L'UTILISATION DES AMENAGEMENTS PUBLICS PAR L'ENFANT EN SUEDE

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INTRODUCTION

Dans cet exposé, je vais m'entretenir de certains problèmes sociaux liés au fait qu'en Suède les catégories de gens économiquement, politiquement et socialement inférieures vivent dans une large mesure coupées de celles socialement dominantes: elles sont victimes d'une ségrégation sociale. Cette ségrégation tient à une discrimination envers des catégories comme les travailleurs pauvres, les immigrants, les assistés sociaux et les minorités ethniques. L'infériorité de certaines catégories de gens dans une société est liée à d'autres facteurs qui leur sont propres, comme le manque relatif de ressources économiques et le manque de pouvoir politique. Néanmoins, je ne consacrerai pas mon exposé à l'analyse détaillée de ces corrélations. Avant de parler de la nature et de l'impact de la ségrégation socio-économique dans les villes suédoises, je vais me pencher sur la corrélation entre ce phénomène social et d'autres formes de mauvais traitement de nos catégories défavorisées.

LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE: UNE FORME DE DISCRIMINATION

Permettez-moi de commencer par une affirmation plutôt formaliste. Quand dans une société les classes supérieures évitent plus ou moins systématiquement les contacts avec les catégories inférieures, ces dernières sont victimes d'une forme de mauvais traitement, ou de discrimination.

Il faut savoir que ce mauvais traitement peut revêtir bien des formes. Il pourra sauter aux yeux, par exemple, quand dans une société les classes inférieures ne cessent de parler de catégories défavorisées en des termes désobligeants et empreints de préjugés (ce qui est particulièrement souvent le cas à l'égard des minorités ethniques). Il est également facile à discerner quand on menace de recourir à la force et à la violence contre ces catégories de gens pour les forcer à agir d'une façon conforme aux intérêts des classes au pouvoir; et inutile de préciser que le recours à la force et à la violence contre les défavorisés entre également dans cette catégorie.

Mais quand les classes dominantes évitent consciemment les contacts avec des catégories plus faibles, il n'est pas aussi facile de voir dans cette attitude une forme de mauvais traitement. Cela tient à plusieurs choses.

Premièrement, les gens des classes dominantes soutiennent qu'ils évitent ceux d'une catégorie inférieure simplement par préférence personnelle, même s'il se trouve qu'ils agissent tous (ou presque tous) ainsi et s'ils pensent de toute évidence que les membres de cette catégorie défavorisée ne devraient pas avoir accès à la richesse et au pouvoir. Deuxièmement, les plus puissants parviennent souvent à orienter les aménagements (comme les logements et les services) de telle manière qu'à toutes fins pratiques les plus faibles ont un handicap manifeste quand il s'agit d'en profiter. On peut mettre des obstacles sans déclarer expressément que certaines catégories de gens ne sont pas les bienvenues dans certains quartiers ou établissements. C'est uniquement lorsque des catégories défavorisées se voient interdire l'utilisation d'aménagements par des lois et des règlements que l'évitement de contacts physiques et sociaux devient une forme patente de discrimination. Troisièmement, les choses se compliquent dès lors que les gens de catégories inférieures s'abstiennent souvent d'avoir des rapports sociaux avec ceux des classes dominantes, mais pour des raisons bien différentes de celles qui incitent les seconds à se démarquer des premiers.

Le fait qu'il ne soit pas facile de mettre le doigt sur bien des formes de ségrégation sociale liées à une discrimination consciente envers les catégories défavorisées signifie qu'il est difficile de combattre de telles attitudes.

LA TOURNURE DE LA SEGREGATION EN MATIERE D'HABITATION ET D'AUTRES FORMES DE SEGREGATION SOCIALE DANS LES VILLES SUEDOISES

Le fait que les catégories inférieures soient physiquement coupées des classes dominantes accentue la discrimination sociale dont elles sont victimes, et entre dans le mauvais traitement dont elles sont constamment l'objet en Suède. Les enfants sont particulièrement affectés par ce genre de discrimination.

De fait, les enfants de ces catégories doivent passer une bonne partie de leur jeunesse dans des conditions plus pauvres et moins stimulantes, notamment au sein de nos grandes villes. Ils grandissent dans des quartiers qui leur offrent peu de services publics et de loisirs, ainsi que des installations de moins bonne qualité que ceux où vivent et passent le plus gros de leur temps libre les enfants de condition plus favorisée. Le fait est, et c'est important à souligner, que dans ces quartiers moins favorisés les aires de jeux, les garderies, les écoles, les centres de jeunes et les installations récréatives, y compris les terrains de sport et les établissements culturels, offrent dans l'ensemble aux usagers des conditions sociales moins variées et stimulantes que les institutions équivalentes dans les quartiers de la haute et la moyenne bourgeoisie en Suède.

C'est ce qu'ont démontré bien des études sur la ségrégation sociale en Suède. A cet égard, je tiens à mentionner particulièrement celle réalisée par Conny et Marianne Svenning sur la ségrégation sociale au sein des garderies municipales de Malmö, et celle que mènent actuellement Berit Anderson, Göran Arnman et Ingrid Jensson sur la ségrégation scolaire dans quatre villes suédoises et leurs banlieues (Stockholm, Malmö, Linköping et

Boras). Les principaux résultats de ces études sont divulgués dans un rapport établi par le gouvernment suédois à titre de contribution à l'Année internationale de l'enfant, lancée et parrainée par les Nations Unies.[1]

Cette ségrégation physique est historiquement liée au développement des grands centres industriels suédois. Ces agglomérations ont pris leur essor vers la fin du XIXe siècle. Dans nos localités marchandes de l'époque pré-industrielle, la ségrégation physique des diverses classes sociales était loin d'être aussi tranchée qu'elle allait le devenir quand ces localités se transformeraient en villes industrielles dans les décennies précédant et suivant immédiatement 1900. L'essor des grosses usines employant des centaines, puis des milliers de travailleurs, a fait naître d'importants quartiers ouvriers. Plus tard, avec le groupement des lieux de travail et des professions de la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie au centre des grandes villes, certains quartiers en sont arrivés à être l'apanage de cette élite. Cette tendance a été fortement influencée par l'avènement des nouveaux moyens de transports, comme le tramway, le train de banlieue, le métro et l'automobile. Il en est résulté dans les trois plus grandes villes de Suède (Stockholm, Göteborg et Malmö, comptant entre 200 000 et 800 000 habitants) et aussi, jusqu'à un certain point, nos villes de moyenne importance (comptant entre 80 000 et 150 000 habitants, comme Västeras, Linköping, Boras, Eskilstuna et Norrköping) un phénomène de ségrégation sociale très net aujourd'hui. Les familles ouvrières, les assistés sociaux et les immigrants (très largement employés comme travailleurs manuels) vivent dans des quartiers déterminés - conçus et construits pour eux - tandis que d'autres quartiers sont réservés aux couches plus aisées.

Les implications pour le bien-être de la jeunesse sont assez évidentes. La plupart des gens, mais surtout les enfants, passent le plus gros de leur temps au sein ou à proximité du domicile, dans un espace restreint. Pour eux, la ségrégation en matière d'habitation se traduit par une ségrégation au niveau des services et des installations qu'ils utilisent.

Même si elle est due en grande partie à une large ségrégation professionnelle (au niveau, par exemple, des usines et des bureaux) de la population adulte, la ségrégation en matière d'habitation accentue elle aussi à bien des égards cette ségrégation professionnelle. Il existe une interaction complexe mais puissante entre la ségrégation professionnelle, la ségrégation en matière d'habitation, la ségrégation scolaire et la ségrégation au niveau des divers types de services publics et d'institutions récréatives.

Aujourd'hui, la ségrégation sociale dans les villes suédoises a un effet déplorable sur la vie de bien des individus. Elle peut également être vue comme un problème social au niveau structurel, en ce sens que les responsables de nos grosses municipalités ont créé et entretiennent une structure qui sert les intérêts de la haute et la moyenne bourgeoisie, en négligeant ceux des catégories défavorisées.

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[1] Mats Forsberg et Stefan Petterson, Segregationens Konsevenser för Barn (Stockholm, 1979). Le rapport est en deux volumes: le premier donne un aperçu général du problème, le second présente six exposés de fond par des sociologues.

LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE ET LES RAPPORTS SOCIAUX

Les chercheurs ne sont pas d'accord sur l'impact qu'a la ségrégation socio-économique en matière d'habitation au niveau des rapports sociaux entre les diverses catégories socio-économiques. Bien qu'il n'existe pas beaucoup de données empiriques à ce sujet, la plupart des chercheurs suédois conviennent que dans les grandes villes les quartiers uniformément ouvriers sont souvent devenus le siège d'une interaction sociale intense entre habitants. Ils se caractérisent également par une forte entraide dans la vie de tous les jours. Tant dans les grandes villes que dans les petites localités industrielles, les travailleurs de ces quartiers ont développé une solide structure politique et une véritable culture ouvrière. Les études empiriques réalisées en Suède ne permettent pas de savoir exactement dans quelle mesure des phénomènes équivalents peuvent se retrouver dans les quartiers de la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie; néanmoins, les auteurs qui ont décrit ces communautés dans des romans et des études historiques indiquent souvent, directement ou indirectement, que c'est le cas.[2]

Cependant, il n'est pas tout-à-fait évident que l'interaction sociale entre différentes classes s'intensifie nettement quand elles cohabitent dans des quartiers socialement intégrés. En fait, bien des auteurs ont laissé entendre que les rapports sociaux ne se forment pas parce que les gens vivent en contact étroit, mais parce qu'ils doivent collaborer dans leur travail ou par ailleurs. D'un autre côté, on pourrait s'attendre à ce que les gens travaillant à différents niveaux hiérarchiques dans de grosses entreprises ou d'autres milieux de travail collaborent plus facilement s'ils sont habitués à se côtoyer dans leurs quartiers. Il est également manifeste qu'une volonté commune de cohabiter harmonieusement peut favoriser les rapports sociaux entre personnes à différents niveaux de l'échelle socio-économique; cela peut promouvoir une certaine compréhension mutuelle, ainsi que le partage d'idées, d'attitudes et de valeurs entre gens de classes supérieures et inférieures au sein d'une communauté.

En Suède, cette question a fait l'objet d'un débat animé entre les tenants de l'idée que la coopération des diverses couches socio-économiques est le meilleur instrument de progrès dans une société (cette idée de l'entente est souvent rattachée en philosophie et en sociologie à l'école de Durkheim) et ceux qui pensent que le progrès doit passer par la lutte des classes (une conception manifestement très imprégnée de marxisme).

L'HISTOIRE ET L'IMPACT DE DEUX FORMES DE SEGREGATION EN MATIERE D'HABITATION DANS LES VILLES SUEDOISES: LE TAUDIS ET LA POLARISATION SOCIO-ECONOMIQUE

Toutes les formes de ségrégation socio-économique ne font pas des différences importantes dans la qualité du cadre de vie des diverses

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[2] Quelques quartiers ouvriers de grandes villes suédoises ont été étudiés et décrits par des anthropologues et des sociologues. Ake Daun a ainsi publié une étude intéressante sur le quartier ouvrier de l'Ile Reimersholmen, à Stockholm (Förortsliv, Stockholm: Prisma, 1974).

classes sociales. Il existe en effet des formes subtiles de ségrégation sans ce genre de conséquences. Il arrive que les différences que fait cette ségrégation dans la qualité du milieu puissent être atténuées par des mesures efficaces (ce que l'on entend parfois en disant "distincts mais égaux"). D'après mon expérience des villes suédoises, les jeunes pâtissent énormément de deux formes particulières de ségrégation.

L'une d'entre elles est l'existence de taudis. On en trouve dans toutes nos grandes villes; ainsi, le quartier de Aspudden à Stockholm, celui de Haga à Göteborg et celui de Ostergard à Malmö. Ce sont tous des quartiers relativement petits, comptant de un à quelques milliers d'habitants avec un revenu moyen extrêmement faible. En général, la grosse majorité des résidents ont un dossier auprès du bureau municipal des services sociaux.

Ces taudis sont nés avec l'industrialisation, quand des quartiers ouvriers sont devenus des "refuges" pour familles et individus dans la misère. Les enfants et les jeunes de ces quartiers subissent de toute évidence beaucoup d'influences néfastes. Ils sont généralement exposés très tôt à l'alcoolisme, la drogue, la délinquance et la criminalité, et sont encouragés dans cette voie. De plus, venant de "bas quartiers", ils vont se faire regarder de haut par la majorité des gens - parfois même les camarades de classe, les professeurs et les assistants sociaux.

L'autre forme de ségrégation est la polarisation socio-économique de nos grandes villes. Il s'agit d'une forme de ségrégation environnementale, dont on peut souvent trouver l'origine dans la répartition des premiers quartiers ouvriers et bourgeois au début de l'industrialisation. A l'époque, les riches et les influents ont préféré certains quartiers, peut-être à cause de la proximité des installations culturelles existant au vieux centre-ville, des facilités de transport ou tout simplement de l'agrément des lieux. Il y a également d'autres raisons à cela. Ces nouveaux quartiers sont devenus par la suite attirants également en raison de la composition sociale de leur population, tandis que ceux généralement situés près d'usines, en accueillant essentiellement des ouvriers, ont présenté moins d'intérêt pour la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie. Ceci fait qu'aujourd'hui, dans la plupart de nos villes de moyenne et grosse taille, il y a polarisation: la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie est essentiellement concentrée dans une partie (dans le nord de Stockholm, par exemple) et la classe ouvrière dans une autre (comme dans le sud de Stockholm). C'est la même chose à Göteborg, où la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie est concentrée dans la partie sud-ouest, la classe ouvrière dans la partie nord-est. A Malmö, la division est très nette: dans l'est, la classe ouvrière principalement; dans l'ouest, la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie.

Bien que les différences ne sautent pas toujours immédiatement aux yeux, elles sont aisément vérifiables par l'analyse des données recueillies. On peut facilement se rendre compte que dans les quartiers ouvriers les écoles ont généralement des professeurs moins qualifiés (du moins si l'on en juge d'après le nombre d'années de service) et que les services médicaux, commerciaux et culturels y sont moins bons que dans les quartiers de la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie. D'autres indications viennent confirmer ces différences.

Cette polarisation socio-économique s'est généralement accentuée au cours des dernières années, mais aussi quelque peu modifiée, dans sa forme environnementale, par suite de la façon dont les autorités municipales ont aménagé les quartiers dans les deux dernières dizaines d'années. Elles se sont faites à l'idée que les nouveaux logements urbains seraient de deux types: immeubles d'appartements à louer, pavillons et maisons contiguës à acheter. Ces deux types d'habitations sont souvent situés à un emplacement tel qu'elles entretiennent et accentuent la polarisation existante.

C'est ainsi qu'en Suède les jeunes de nos villes de moyenne et grande taille grandissent en fait dans des "mondes différents". Pour s'en rendre compte, il suffit de visiter (le même jour) des terrains de jeux, des garderies, des écoles et des centres de jeunes dans les deux parties d'une telle ville.[3]

LES MOYENS DE NEUTRALISER LA SEGREGATION SOCIO-ECONOMIQUE DANS LES VILLES SUEDOISES

J'ai déjà souligné que la ségrégation dans les villes suédoises, qui semble s'être accentuée ces dernières années, a fort probablement beaucoup d'effets néfastes. Cependant, il est difficile de prouver irréfutablement leur existence.

Il y a également de bonnes raisons de penser que les enfants et les jeunes y sont particulièrement vulnérables. Dans les années décisives de leur développement intellectuel et affectif, ils ont particulièrement besoin d'un milieu social stimulant, enrichissant, s'ils veulent avoir la chance de devenir des êtres mûrs, créatifs.

A l'heure actuelle, on discute des moyens de neutraliser la ségrégation sociale. Je vais en parler dans cette partie.

J'aimerais cependant insister tout d'abord sur le fait que l'on ne saurait escompter une amélioration notable dans un proche avenir. L'inertie au sein des structures sociales actuelles de nos villes semble énorme et confond facilement quiconque va au fond du problème. Des solutions sont néanmoins envisagées, et des actions tentées.

I. MOYENS D'ATTAQUER LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE COMME UN PROBLEME STRUCTUREL GLOBAL

Nous devons trouver le moyen de réaménager nos villes dans l'optique de faire profiter également tous les citoyens, quelle que soit

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[3] Ce problème est fort bien mis en relief dans un court exposé éloquent par Anders Abelin et Karin Paulsen, intitulé "Beskrivningar av alika slags daghem" et publié dans le volume 2 du rapport Segregationens Konsekvenser för Barn, op. cit., par Mats Forsberg et Stefan Petterson. Un autre ouvrage récent qui renferme beaucoup de matériaux en relation avec cette partie de l'exposé est Barn i Stan Fran Sekelskiftet till Sjuttiotalet, Helena H. Henschen (éd.), Stockholm, 1979.

leur condition, de toutes sortes de services. Les lieux de travail doivent être planifiés et aménagés, et les logements financés et construits dans cette perspective. Les aménagements comme les terrains de jeux, les garderies, les écoles et les centres de jeunes doivent être aussi conçus dans cet esprit. En Suède, nous tentons de planifier les nouveaux quartiers de banlieue et de rénover les anciens quartiers de nos villes dans cette optique, mais nous ne sommes économiquement pas en mesure de le faire à l'échelon de nos grosses agglomérations et municipalités. Les villes dont nous avons hérité présentent des lacunes et des injustices "inhérentes", qui ne peuvent être éliminées du jour au lendemain. Cela va prendre des dizaines d'années.

II. MOYENS DE S'ATTAQUER A CERTAINS ASPECTS STRUCTURELS DE LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE

Certains moyens préconisés pour modifier des aspects déterminés des structures physiques des villes et les règles régissant leur utilisation sont plus prometteurs. Ces mesures ne vont pas faire disparaître complètement la ségrégation sociale, mais pourraient servir à l'atténuer dans les domaines où ses effets néfastes sont jugés particulièrement importants.

Une technique qui a été utilisée de temps à autre consiste à réaménager des quartiers de petits immeubles insalubres en rénovant certains des logements de manière à les transformer en appartements spacieux et bien équippés, susceptibles d'attirer une clientèle plus riche. Les résidents de ces quartiers s'y sont souvent fortement opposés, car rénover peut vouloir dire chasser les pauvres. Un autre moyen, qui n'a pas été utilisé aussi souvent pour des raisons assez évidentes, est de faire emménager des familles ouvrières dans des quartiers essentiellement bourgeois avec l'aide des services d'assistance sociale.

L'idée d'atténuer la ségrégation socio-économique par une répartition sélective de certaines familles - par exemple, d'immigrants récents - a été aussi appliquée dans une certaine mesure par certains services municipaux de logement (à Malmö, par exemple). En général, on l'a fait avant tout non pour atténuer la ségrégation sociale et ses effets néfastes dans les quartiers en cause, mais pour remplir des appartements inoccupés. Dans ce cas, il est assez évident que les efforts déployés pour atténuer la ségrégation sociale cadrent mal avec le droit traditionnel pour les individus et les familles de choisir librement leur logement dans l'éventail offert par le marché (et les limites de leurs moyens financiers). En Suède, cette mesure continue à être débattue et de nouvelles variantes, visant à ne pas donner aux habitants l'impression d'être manipulés, vont fort probablement être essayées dans un proche avenir.

Partant du principe qu'il faut encore accepter pendant un certain temps une ségrégation en matière d'habitation dans nos grandes villes, nous pourrions tenter d'en atténuer les effets en situant et en construisant les installations voulues de manière à rapprocher en leur sein enfants (et parents) de différents milieux sociaux. Cela peut se faire de maintes façons. On peut, par exemple, aménager ces installations non pas au coeur de quartiers ouvriers ou bourgeois, comme cela se fait généralement maintenant, mais à la frontière de ces deux genres de quartiers. On peut également adopter des

règlements stricts pour fixer par exemple des écoles aux familles de certains quartiers, plus ou moins indépendamment de l'emplacement des domiciles ou des écoles. A cet égard, l'acheminement par autobus scolaire a été envisagé et cette solution vivement écartée. Dans la plupart des municipalités suédoises, un grand nombre d'élèves sont transportés chaque jour à l'école par autobus scolaire, mais jamais comme un moyen de remédier à la forte ségrégation scolaire régnant dans nos grandes villes. Un enfant suédois est transporté par autobus scolaire ou utilise des transports publics sur de longues distances en ville parce qu'il requiert une éducation particulière ou que les écoles de son quartier sont combles. Dans les régions rurales, le transport scolaire sur de longues distances est indispensable et parfaitement admis pour les enfants de localités clairsemées et dépourvues d'école. Mais aucune autorité scolaire en Suède n'oserait proposer - ou même envisager - l'acheminement par autobus scolaire comme moyen d'atténuer la ségrégation socio-économique au niveau de l'école.

III. MOYENS D'ESSAYER D'ATTENUER LES EFFETS NEFASTES DE LA SEGREGATION SOCIALE

La plus prometteuse des mesures récemment envisagées en Suède - et la seule à être vraiment appliquée jusqu'à un certain point - consiste à dédommager les habitants de quartiers défavorisés du point de vue logements et services, en leur fournissant une aide supplémentaire sous forme d'argent et d'effectifs pour leur donner accès à d'autres biens et activités. L'idée a été lancée en Suède par une commission nationale sur l'organisation interne des écoles. Celle-ci a proposé que les municipalités manifestement aux prises avec de graves problèmes sociaux au niveau scolaire reçoivent de l'argent de l'Etat et le distribuent aux conseils scolaires qui conviennent afin de dédommager les enfants d'écoles ayant beaucoup de problèmes pour les piètres conditions de vie offertes par leurs quartiers. Cet argent sert généralement à rémunérer des assistants sociaux (skolkuratorer) et des professeurs spécialement formés qui s'occupent des enfants avec des problèmes particuliers. On l'utilise couramment pour financer des ateliers de lecture et des activités récréatives.

De plus, le principe du dédommagement est devenu petit à petit un moyen de justifier l'affectation de fonds supplémentaires à divers types de projets d'aménagement communautaires dans les quartiers défavorisés. Il a inspiré une bonne partie des aménagements communautaires qui se sont multipliés récemment en Suède, comme en témoignent le projet de Ostergard à Malmö, celui de Aspudden à Stockholm, celui de Pitangen à Landskrona et celui de Raslätt à Jönköping - pour ne citer que quelques-uns des quinze à vingt projets ambitieux menés à bien depuis 1968.

CONCLUSION

Il faut se souvenir que même si la ségrégation socio-économique est un de ces phénomènes sociaux qui conduisent à un mauvais traitement des catégories inférieures et défavorisées dans nos villes - et touchent particulièrement les enfants et les jeunes de ces couches sociales - ce n'est pas la seule forme de mauvais traitement de ce genre.

Les enfants des familles des catégories défavorisées sont souvent traités d'une manière désobligeante et discriminatoire, même s'ils vivent dans des quartiers socialement intégrés et fréquentent des écoles socialement bien équilibrées. Les études sur la vie sociale au sein de l'école ont démontré qu'il subsiste une forte ségrégation sociale dans les établissements socio-économiquement intégrés. Les enfants de familles pauvres et d'immigrants ne sont souvent - pour bien des raisons - pas acceptés dans les cliques et les associations de la moyenne et la haute bourgeoisie; ceux qui vivent dans des quartiers moyens bourgeois et fréquentent des écoles où il y a peu d'enfants de leur milieu risquent de se sentir très isolés et mal à l'aise. On semble également pouvoir s'attendre à ce que les élèves de différentes conditions sociales soient traités différemment par leurs professeurs, même s'ils étudient dans la même école et la même classe.

Voilà notamment pourquoi il n'y a pas de solutions faciles aux problèmes que posent pour l'enfant et le jeune la ségrégation et la discrimination sociales jouant dans le domaine du logement et d'autres services au sein de nos villes. Ces problèmes sont tous liés à l'ensemble des structures sociales. Le grand dilemme est de savoir comment faire face d'une manière justifiable aux problèmes des enfants et des jeunes élevés dans différents milieux sociaux, qu'ils viennent d'écoles et de quartiers séparés ou intégrés.

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LIGNES DIRECTRICES POUR LA PLANIFICATION D'AIRES DE JEUX

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I. INTRODUCTION

Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux sont destinées à accompagner les politiques municipales et les lois provinciales et régionales régissant l'urbanisme. Elles ont pour but d'assurer qu'on tienne pleinement compte des traits caractéristiques des enfants et des jeunes ainsi que de leurs besoins en matière de jeux dans tout aménagement de nos communautés, surtout dans les zones résidentielles. Bien sûr, aucune loi ne peut contrôler la qualité des principes de design. Ces lignes directrices cherchent surtout à mener à une plus grande prise de conscience et à une meilleure compréhension des traits caractéristiques des enfants et de leurs besoins en matière de jeux. Elles veulent encourager et assurer une conception globale de la planification des jeux des enfants.

Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux veulent offrir une ligne de conduite aux responsables de la conception et de la mise en application des politiques de réaménagement urbain. Elles s'adressent au grand nombre de personnes et de groupes qui forment l'équipe de planification, y compris les planificateurs urbains et communautaires, les architectes et architectes paysagistes, les services des logements et des loisirs, les groupes de citoyens (par exemple, les associations de locataires), les services sociaux et les responsables en matière d'éducation, les députés élus et les défenseurs des droits des enfants et des jeunes.

II. PLANIFICATION DES JEUX - UNE VUE D'ENSEMBLE

Les enfants et les jeunes représentent 35% de la population du Canada. Comment peut-on laisser de côté ce secteur important de notre population dans la planification et le réaménagement de nos communautés?

Le Canada a été fort lent à réagir devant le besoin qu'ont les enfants de tous les âges d'avoir accès aux jeux. Même si une documentation ample signale l'importance capitale du jeu dans l'évolution de chaque enfant, il demeure vrai que, dans plusieurs communautés rurales, dans les villes et les banlieues, l'accès aux jeux créatifs et aux jeux à l'aventure se trouve sérieusement limité. Certains milieux, même, n'offrent aux enfants aucune forme d'accès aux jeux.

Une enquête faite en 1977 auprès de certaines municipalités choisies au hasard a démontré que la plupart des politiques d'urbanisme ne

tenaient pas compte des besoins des enfants et des jeunes en matière de jeux. Les résultats d'un autre questionnaire national, distribué par nos soins en 1979, ont démontré que seulement 50% des répondants considéraient que leur milieu favorisait l'évolution de leurs enfants. L'un des principaux sujets de critique était l'absence d'aires de jeux en plein air et d'espaces désignés où les enfants pourraient jouer en toute sécurité.

Le taux d'urbanisation croît à un rythme affolant, ce qui a pour effet de transformer radicalement nos communautés. La haute concentration de logis, l'augmentation de la valeur des terrains et la circulation accrue, ont réduit à l'extrême l'espace disponible. On trouve rarement, de nos jours, des espaces libres et des aires naturelles où les enfants peuvent se lancer à l'aventure et s'amuser en toute liberté.

De toute évidence, bon nombre de problèmes personnels et sociaux dont sont affligés les jeunes d'aujourd'hui sont attribuables au nombre trop restreint d'occasions de jouer. Plus les enfants seront exposés à des expériences de jeux favorables, plus verra-t-on diminuer l'incidence de comportement délinquant, de vandalisme et d'inadaptation sociale.

Le jeu occupe une place importante dans l'évolution intellectuelle, sociale et physique de l'enfant. Le jeu ouvre les enfants de tous les âges à des activités qui, choisies librement, leur permettent de développer leurs talents, leur montrent comment établir des liens avec ceux du même âge, leur donnent une certaine connaissance de leur propre personnalité et leur montrent comment utiliser leur potentiel. C'est grâce au jeu que l'enfant apprend à se connaître, à connaître les autres et le monde environnant. L'enfant a autant besoin d'une expérience de jeu riche et diversifiée qu'il a besoin d'une alimentation saine et de sommeil suffisant. Il devient donc capital d'élaborer une conception d'ensemble des aires de jeux pour toute la communauté. Le jeu est un apprentissage de la vie. Ne pas offrir aux enfants le plus grand nombre possible d'occasions de jouer, revient à leur refuser une formation de base pour leur future vie d'adulte. Tout le processus de planification doit nécessairement tenir compte des besoins des jeunes et en faire une des priorités les plus importantes.

La planification du jeu des enfants s'est toujours concentrée sur les terrains de jeux. On semble vouloir perpétuer le mythe que les enfants jouent d'abord et avant tout dans les espaces désignés comme aires de jeux ou terrains de jeux. Or les enfants s'amusent n'importe où et partout. (Votre propre enfance peut en fournir la preuve!) Il faut tenir compte de cette vérité et organiser en conséquence les jeux au sein de la communauté.

Les enfants ont besoin d'espaces de jeux improvisés autant que des espaces réglementaires (ou désignés). Il leur faut des endroits où ils se sentent libres de courir, sauter, s'amuser à toutes sortes de jeux fantaisistes, mettre leur courage à l'épreuve, se lancer mutuellement des défis. Il leur faut des lieux d'où observer la vie de tous les jours des gens de leur communauté. Les occasions de jouer doivent faire partir intégrale de la vie communautaire. Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux veulent offrir aux enfants un accès plus complet aux jeux créatifs, diversifiés et sécuritaires. Seule une conception globale du jeu, au moment de la planification, peut permettre d'atteindre cet objectif.

III. LIGNES DIRECTRICES SUR LES AIRES DE JEUX

a) L'importance du jeu

Il faudra prévoir des aires de jeux dans toutes les zones résidentielles existantes situées à peu de distance du logement afin de satisfaire les besoins récréatifs des enfants et des adolescents, et d'encourager la participation de la famille. Les enfants s'adonnent aux jeux partout: sur le trottoir, devant l'entrée ou en bordure de la rue. Il faudrait prendre des dispositions qui donnent libre cours à ce genre de jeu occasionnel et fortuit. En outre, dans tous les aménagements résidentiels, on a besoin à l'extérieur du logement d'une diversité d'espace pour faciliter les activités des divers groupes d'âges qui sont notamment les bébés, les enfants très jeunes, les enfants d'âge préscolaire, les enfants d'âge scolaire, les adolescents, les adultes, les personnes âgées et les handicapés de tout âge. Les aires de jeux pour enfants devront être conçues pour encourager et favoriser le développement intégral de l'enfant en lui fournissant des occasions d'interaction sociale, de jeu physique, créatif et cognitif. L'établissement de tels espaces de jeux dans toute la collectivité revêt une grande importance, mais ceux-ci sont à plus forte raison indispensables dans les secteurs de collectifs d'habitations.

Quand il faut mettre au point des installations de jeux à l'intérieur d'une zone résidentielle, il importe de tenir compte avant tout des groupes d'enfants d'âge préscolaire et d'âge scolaire au niveau de l'élémentaire. Ces enfants s'amusent plus prêts de la maison. Ils ont d'ailleurs des traits distinctifs qui influeront considérablement sur le choix de l'emplacement et sur la conception de leurs aires de jeux. Par ailleurs, tout en pouvant profiter des installations pour adultes, les adolescents demandent qu'on reconnaisse les besoins spéciaux de leurs groupes d'égaux.

L'interaction naturelle entre divers groupes d'âges constitue un élément primordial d'apprentissage et de socialisation. On peut donc situer les installations à proximité les unes des autres afin de mieux répondre aux besoins et aux intérêts. Mais il faut concevoir et délimiter ces installations de telle façon qu'elles découragent les enfants plus âgés et plus habiles à exercer une domination malencontreuse sur les plus jeunes ou à les influencer de façon négative.

b) Recommandations pour jeunes enfants (de 1 à 6 ans)

Ces jeunes enfants âgés de 1 à 6 ans dépendent énormément de leurs parents; voilà pourquoi ils jouent à proximité du foyer. Par conséquent, leurs espaces de jeux devraient se trouver à une faible distance du logis, soit 100 m (110 verges), et autant de logements que possible devraient les surplomber pour faciliter la surveillance des parents.

Lorsqu'on songera aux décisions atteignant les jeunes enfants, il faudra inclure les installations de jeux décrites ci-après.

1. Parc/jardin de jeux pour enfants d'âge préscolaire: Ces aires devraient être invitantes et intimes et comporter des zones de jeux créatifs/cognitifs, des zones sociales physiques et paisibles ainsi qu'un

endroit où pourront s'asseoir les parents qui accompagnent leurs enfants. L'aire de jeux pour enfants d'âge préscolaire devrait ressembler à un jardin et être délimité par une enceinte peu élevée à dessein d'empêcher les tout petits de s'éloigner, de favoriser une surveillance intermittente et d'en interdire l'accès aux enfants plus âgés. Tout l'équipement de jeux devrait être à l'échelle des enfants de cet âge. La superficie recommandée de cet espace oscille entre 72 et 250 m^2 (800-2 500 pieds carrés). Le nombre approximatif d'enfants que l'on peut recevoir à la fois se situe entre 20 et 30 enfants; si l'on en compte davantage, ce parc/jardin ne s'inscrira plus dans l'échelle de ce groupe d'âges qui ne pourra plus faire face à cette situation.

2. Centre de jeux pour enfants d'âge préscolaire: Il faudrait prévoir dans le voisinage un centre de jeux pour les enfants d'âge préscolaire qui serait ouvert gratuitement toute l'année. Ce centre équipé comme une maternelle devrait être muni d'une salle de jeux intérieure, d'installations de toilette, d'un endroit de rangement et d'installations pour offrir certains rafraîchissements; ce centre devrait être muni d'un jardin de jeux adjacent et complètement équipé pour les préscolaires. Les installations existantes, par exemple celles d'une salle de classe ou d'un centre communautaire, peuvent souvent être adaptées à cette fin. Le centre de jeux diffère d'une maternelle ou d'un groupe immatriculé de jeux en ce que les parents doivent accompagner leurs enfants comme ils le feraient en tout temps dans un parc. On a donc caractérisé ce centre par l'endroit où peuvent s'asseoir confortablement les adultes, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur. Les centres de jeux exigent de la surveillance, mais la proportion du personnel en regard des enfants peut être de l'ordre de 1 à 30, ou plus, précisément à cause de la présence des parents. Les centres de jeux partagent très souvent leurs installations avec les écoles maternelles établies en vertu de dispositions réglementaires, et ce, pour une demi-journée afin de répartir les coûts d'équipement et d'entretien. La taille recommandée d'un centre de jeux, y compris l'immeuble et le jardin de jeux, varie entre 185 et 370 m^2 (2 000-4 000 pieds carrés).

Il faudrait répartir de tels centres dans la proportion d'un par voisinage. Il est de toute première importance de fournir ce service aux zones à densité élevée surtout lorsqu'il sert de complément à la vie en appartement. Le nombre approximatif d'enfants et d'adultes que le centre de jeux peut recevoir à la fois est de 40 à 100 personnes.

c) Recommandations pour enfants d'âge scolaire (de 6 à 11 ans et de 12 à 17)

Les enfants dont les âges sont situés dans cette échelle étendue ont un caractère plus indépendant et n'insistent pas tant sur le foyer que les enfants d'âge préscolaire. Les plus jeunes préfèrent tout de même s'amuser dans leur voisinage immédiat. En conséquence, cette aire de jeux pour les enfants d'âge scolaire ne devrait pas se trouver plus loin que 300 m (350 verges) des logements familieux. A mesure que l'enfant se développe et que ses compétences sportives augmentent, il recherche des installations sportives de taille normale comme les terrains de baseball, les patinoires de hockey, et les courts de tennis. Les enfants et les adolescents parcourent de 400 m ($\frac{1}{4}$ de mille) à 1 500 m (1 mille) pour atteindre ces genres de terrain de jeux.

Au cours d'une journée moyenne, toutefois, ce groupe d'âges participe à toute une série de jeux improvisés; il se livre à l'exploration sociale et créatrice, à des exercices physiques et à des jeux compétitifs. Ces activités importent au développement de l'enfant tout entier et elles sont facilitées

1. par une aire de jeux bien conçue et équipée,
2. par un endroit bien situé et dégagé,
3. par un endroit plus restreint destiné aux jeux paisibles.

Ce groupe d'âges aimera utiliser de vrais outils et des résidus de matériaux dans la construction de sa propre hutte, de sa cachette privée; ces jeunes aiment du matériel de jeux capable de relever n'importe quel défi.

Les installations de jeux décrites ci-après devraient faire partie des plans qui s'adressent aux jeunes de 6 à 11 ans et de 12 à 17 ans.

1. Aires de création: Les jeunes enfants de ce groupe d'âges (6-11) se plaisent dans des aires de jeux bien réalisées et bien équipées. Ces enfants ont besoin de matériel qui mette au défi leur compétence physique en évolution, leur ingéniosité, leur sens de la découverte. En terme de conception, il faut assurer toute une gamme de choix et des matériaux à manipuler. La diversité naturelle fournit des occasions de jeux illimitées. Il faudrait donc préserver ou rehausser le milieu naturel. En outre, l'emplacement et l'aménagement paysager approprié de l'aire de jeux créatifs peut contribuer à atténuer le bruit. Cependant, ces espaces doivent toujours être ouverts à la vue des passants pour y encourager l'intérêt et la responsabilité communautaires. La taille recommandée d'un terrain de jeux créatifs est d'environ 90-900 m^2 (1 000-10 000 pieds carrés). Le terrain reçoit simultanément de 30 à 150 enfants environ.

2. Espaces libres pour jeux occasionnels:

1) Une aire plate, gazonnée ou à surface dure, devrait être prévue pour les jeux improvisés de tout genre comme les jeux de balle, les jeux de filet, le hockey de rue, le hockey sur glace, le patin à roulettes, le ski sur gazon, l'art dramatique et créateur, les marionnettes, la musique et la danse.

2) On peut utiliser les différences naturelles dans l'élévation des terrains ou recourir à l'installation de monticules pour les jeux occasionnels saisonniers. On pourra ainsi permettre que se déroulent certaines activités telles grimper, rouler, glisser, le ski sur neige et sur gazon.

3) Le maintien ou la restauration d'aires naturelles, telles que terrains boisés, marais, affleurement de roches, peut fournir un nombre illimité d'occasions de jouer.

Il faudrait prévoir des espaces de séparation suffisamment à l'écart des logements et des espaces privés extérieurs afin d'étouffer les bruits et de nuire le moins possible. Alentour du périmètre, l'aménagement

paysager contribue à définir l'aire de jeux et à décourager les jeunes qui seraient tentés de dépasser les limites de jeux. Cette aire de jeux ne devrait pas se trouver à plus de 300 m (350 verges) du logement. La taille recommandée est d'au moins 75 m^2 (1 000 pieds carrés). Le nombre approximatif d'enfants et d'adultes que cet espace peut recevoir simultanément variera en fonction de l'activité et de l'espace disponible.

3. Les petits espaces pour les activités paisibles: On rencontre souvent des endroits paisibles où tous les jeunes s'asseoient autour des tables pour y échanger des propos, jouer des jeux de table, faire des travaux d'artisanat et participer à d'autres jeux d'aptitudes et de concentration. De petites parcelles d'espace en commun peuvent servir à ces fins. La famille tout entière peut les utiliser pour diverses activités comme le ping-pong d'extérieur, le ballon captif, le jeu de galet, le jeu de fer à cheval. On peut concevoir l'aménagement paysager de manière à protéger ces activités plus calmes contre les autres, sans buts précis, comme la bicyclette, la course et les jeux de balle. La séparation entre les logements et ces espaces n'a pas à être grande étant donné la nature tranquille et réservée des jeux. La taille recommandée dépend des activités.

4. Terrain de jeux à l'aventure: Ce genre de jeu exige une surveillance exercée dans un endroit clôturé où les enfants utilisent de vrais outils et des débris de matériaux de construction et d'autres objets trouvés pour bâtir des cabanes, des retraites et des structures pour grimper. Les terrains de jeux à l'aventure devraient inclure une installation permanente comprenant une salle de jeux à l'intérieur pour les activités à l'année longue. Ce genre de programme exige des animateurs mûrs et un comité permanent de gestion des terrains de jeux axé sur la collectivité. Le choix du terrain est important étant donné qu'un terrain de jeux à l'aventure revêt le caractère d'un terrain de construction permanent. En conséquence, il faut le maintenir à une certaine distance des logements. Une clôture de 2.5 à 3 mètres de hauteur (8 à 10 pieds) et un aménagement paysager peuvent servir à camoufler l'endroit en le rendant ainsi moins offensif à l'oeil et à l'oreille. Il faut être en mesure de fermer le terrain de jeux lorsque les animateurs n'y sont pas. Un terrain de jeux à l'aventure peut servir une population de 5 000 personnes et devrait être situé à pas plus de 1 500 m (1 mille) de distance des logements. La taille recommandée pour un terrain de jeux à l'aventure varie de 1 000 à 4 000 m^2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ d'acre à 1 acre). Le nombre approximatif d'enfants qu'on peut recevoir simultanément dépend du nombre d'animateurs de jeux, soit 100 à 200 personnes par 1 à 4 animateurs.

5. Aire de jeux tout usage: On peut réussir une combinaison d'espaces de jeux comme les jardins d'enfants pour les enfants préscolaires, les terrains de jeux créatifs, les espaces libres, les jeux paisibles et les terrains de jeux à l'aventure, en se servant des caractéristiques de l'aménagement paysager ou d'une clôture très basse pour délimiter les divers espaces. De cette façon, le jeune enfant ne se sent pas menacé par des activités plus rudes et plus actives des enfants plus âgés et personne ne s'immisce dans les affaires des autres. Bien sûr, une aire de jeux tout usage de grande taille ne peut pas remplacer les petits parcs/jardins de jeux pour les enfants d'âge préscolaire qu'il importe encore d'installer dans la collectivité tout entière à proximité des logements.

d) Recommandations pour les activités de la famille

Afin d'encourager la participation de toute la famille, il faudrait prévoir des pistes cyclables, des pistes de ski de fond, des sentiers dans la nature et des patinoires. On peut conserver les hauts monticules ou des zones naturelles pour le ski ou les pistes de char, les pique-niques, les promenades dans la nature et les autres activités qui tiennent compte des besoins récréatifs de la famille.

e) Recommandations pour les enfants handicapés (de tout âge)

Les enfants accablés de problèmes physiques ou mentaux précis profitent des échanges qui ont lieu le plus souvent possible avec des enfants normaux. Il faudrait que les urbanistes de tous genres s'assurent qu'aucune barrière matérielle dans les aires de jeux ne soit érigée pour les enfants handicapés en fauteuils roulants, et qu'une partie de l'équipement soit destinée à encourager leur épanouissement physique et mental. Les terrains de jeux à l'aventure, en dépit du caractère dangereux apparent qu'ils revêtent, se sont révélés excellents pour les handicapés plus âgés tant du point de vue de concept de jeux que d'installation de jeux. Les enfants peuvent faire des expériences et prendre des initiatives selon leurs aptitudes, avec l'aide non directionnelle d'un guide.

f) Recommandations pour considérations particulières

Pour ce qui est des nouveaux aménagements, le terrain alloué aux espaces de jeux destinés aux enfants et aux adolescents devrait être établi tôt dans le processus de rassemblement de terrain et ainsi affecter l'endroit qui convient le mieux aux groupes d'âges et aux activités prévues.

Dans les zones existantes, le terrain peut faire l'objet de plusieurs contraintes; par exemple, le terrain vacant n'est pas toujours situé au meilleur endroit pour ce qui est des espaces de jeux. Toutefois, il est possible de rendre les terrains disponibles en recyclant les parcs existants et peu fréquentés et en concevant à nouveau les terrains de jeux scolaires dont la collectivité se servira presque jour et nuit et pendant toute l'année.

Les terrains commerciaux ou industriels excédentaires peuvent souvent être recyclés et servir de terrains de jeux à l'aventure ou d'espaces libres de jeux. Il faut tenir compte des fermetures de rues, des droits de passage de l'Hydro ainsi que de l'aménagement des aires passives paysagères où l'on peut y jouer sans en détruire la valeur esthétique ou les caractéristiques en tant qu'espaces libres. De plus, le terrain temporairement disponible ne devrait pas être négligé car il peut servir d'aire de jeux en attendant qu'on décide de son affectation définitive. A l'aide d'équipements portatifs, on peut organiser assez rapidement ces terrains en aires de jeux.

Le soleil, l'abri, l'ombre, les courants d'air influencent grandement le confort matériel et la valeur de jeu d'un espace. Les influences climatiques et les caractéristiques topographiques doivent entrer dans la conception d'une aire de jeu invitante et fréquentée.

IV. COMMENT UTILISER LES LIGNES DIRECTRICES - QUELQUES PRINCIPES GENERAUX

Les lignes directrices, de même que tout critère sur les aires de jeux qui peut en découler, s'appliquent à la fois aux grandes communautés, aux petites villes et aux villages, mais à condition de les adapter aux particularités, aux exigences et aux ressources de chaque milieu donné.

Ces lignes de conduite se concentrent surtout sur l'emplacement physique. Mais la planification de l'aspect physique ne constitue qu'un des éléments de l'effort global pour assurer l'accès aux jeux. La planification physique devrait toujours se faire en conjonction avec la planification sociale, ce qui élargirait le cadre de l'accessibilité aux jeux.

La planification des aires de jeux locales doit s'intégrer à la planification des systèmes d'une communauté. Pour éviter des dédoublements, il serait souhaitable de travailler de concert avec des départements tels travaux publics, logement, éducation et loisirs. Un tel effort combiné permettrait à une communauté d'aborder la question de façon globale et d'une manière sensible.

Il n'est pas réaliste de penser qu'une seule personne, un ministère du gouvernement ou même un palier de gouvernement puisse avoir à sa disposition toutes les ressources et les connaissances nécessaires afin d'assurer que les enfants aient accès aux jeux.

Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux peuvent donner un bon coup de main dans l'élaboration d'un projet de planification, mais il faut à tout prix qu'on consulte les membres de la communauté. Les gens du milieu, les experts en croissance infantile, les enfants eux-mêmes devraient faire partie de toute équipe de planification. La planification, la conception et la gestion de l'aire de jeux ne deviendra un effort communautaire que lorsqu'elles tiendront compte des idées, des suggestions et des critiques des citoyens. La présence des enfants et des jeunes au sein d'une équipe de planification peut apporter une contribution inestimable. On cherche présentement à mettre au point les techniques qui faciliteraient une participation véritable des enfants. Mais il faut d'abord s'engager à les faire participer au processus de planification et de gestion des aires de jeux. Lorsque les jeunes participent activement, on voit du même coup diminuer leur sentiment d'aliénation face à leur milieu et à leur communauté. Quand on implique les jeunes dans le processus de prise de décision et des efforts coopératifs de la communauté, il en découle des bénéfices à court et à long terme.

Afin d'assurer que nos milieux puissent répondre aux besoins changeants, il faut absolument que soit instauré un système d'évaluation de la conception et de l'allocation des aires de jeux. Les enfants sont souvent les mieux situés pour évaluer les aires de jeux; et, à ce titre, on devrait les consulter.

Aussi faut-il rappeler qu'aucune série de lignes de conduite ne peut garder indéfiniment sa validité. Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux doivent être sujettes à une révision et à des amendements en cours de route, à mesure que de nouvelles perceptions indiquent une nouvelle direction à suivre.

Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux n'ont pas la prétention de tenir lieu de critères nationaux sur les aires de jeux. Car le fait d'utiliser des lignes de conduite pour en faire des critères pourrait se justifier, mais comporterait aussi plusieurs désavantages. Ceci vaut également dans d'autres domaines de planification des loisirs. La question qu'il faut se poser c'est à savoir si un ensemble de critères peut répondre aux besoins de chaque communauté en particulier. Les lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux peuvent être adaptées de façon que tout organisme, service ou groupe puisse s'en servir selon sa situation ou sa sphère de compétence. Mais des critères nationaux permettent-ils ou non aux gens de chercher des solutions propres aux besoins spécifiques, aux traits caractéristiques et aux ressources de la communauté en question?

Les lignes directrices veulent démontrer que la planification des aires de jeux ne consiste pas uniquement à appliquer des critères nationaux ou à allouer un nombre "X" d'acres pour un nombre "Y" d'enfants. Les lignes de conduite présentent un concept de planification communautaire globale des jeux. Ceci suppose une connaissance du système d'espaces libres pour les terrains privés et publics, ainsi qu'une compréhension des traits caractéristiques, des besoins des usagers, des ressources de tel quartier. Le concept de particularisation permet d'éviter les dangers que comporte un recours à des critères nationaux, où la tendance à un compartimentage des aires de jeux suscite presque toujours une réaction trop rigide et souvent erronée aux conditions de chaque milieu. Le fait d'appliquer certains critères ne donne généralement pas les mêmes résultats que la recherche et la découverte d'une solution particulière pour chaque quartier ou communauté.[1]

a) Critères municipaux pour les aires de jeux

Il ne faut cependant pas conclure, de là, que l'utilisation de critères sur les aires de jeux a rarement sa raison d'être. Au contraire, les dirigeants municipaux auraient profit à utiliser les lignes directrices afin d'établir une série de critères de base qui seraient adaptés à la communauté et feraient partie d'un système global d'espaces libres ou d'un plan d'ensemble des loisirs.

Pour arriver à une utilisation efficace du concept de particularisation, l'autorité municipale doit:

1. considérer l'existence d'aires de jeux dans la communauté comme élément prioritaire;
2. connaître les traits caractéristiques des enfants et des jeunes ainsi que leurs besoins en matière de jeux;
3. s'adapter aux conditions particulières, aux ressources et aux besoins de la communauté en question; et
4. établir quels sont les besoins précis des habitants, les enfants inclus, et les faire participer au processus de planification.

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[1] Les résolutions de l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux comportent aussi des remarques pertinentes. Voir en annexe la liste de ces résolutions.

Toute élaboration de lignes de conduite municipales exige un travail de coordination par rapport aux critères pour les aires de jeux établis par d'autres autorités, par exemple les critères sur les aires de jeux établis par les autorités pour les aménagements de quartiers résidentiels. Au Canada, il existe un standard national qui exige l'installation des aires de jeux pour enfants, mais seulement lors de l'établissement de nouveaux logements financés par l'entremise de la Loi nationale sur l'habitation (LNH).[2]

b) Critères régionaux et provinciaux pour les aires de jeux

C'est par l'intermédiaire des lois d'urbanisme provinciales que plusieurs provinces effectuent l'allocation ou le transfert de terrains pour en faire des parcs ou pour les consacrer aux loisirs; mais ces lois ne font aucune mention comme telle des aires de jeux pour enfants et jeunes. Il arrive parfois que certaines lois existent permettant aux municipalités de déclencher une action à partir des lignes directrices sur les aires de jeux. Mais, dans les cas où le jeu se situe très bas sur l'échelle des priorités, il faudrait insérer une clause dans la Loi d'urbanisme qui énoncerait clairement, et à juste titre, la réclamation pour les aires de jeux.

Il serait souhaitable de procéder à une révision des lois d'urbanisme provinciales ou régionales afin d'y insérer une clause visant l'allocation d'espace, parmi les terrains destinés aux espaces récréatifs libres, pour les jeux des enfants. La clause ou la déclaration pourrait se lire comme suit: "Parmi les terrains destinés aux espaces récréatifs libres, il faut favoriser l'accessibilité aux jeux pour les enfants. Cette allocation d'espace pour le jeu devrait tenir compte des besoins des enfants et des familles, peu importe l'âge ou l'habileté."

Pour assurer la sauvegarde du droit au jeu de l'enfant, il faut conjuguer les efforts afin d'établir et de mettre en pratique une ligne de conduite sur les aires de jeux ou des standards minimum pour les aménagements résidentiels privés ou publics et pour l'ensemble de la communauté. Pour atteindre cet objectif, il faut:

1. une planification globale de l'accessibilité des jeux à partir du foyer, en passant par le milieu immédiat et allant jusqu'à l'ensemble de la communauté: à partir de la porte d'entrée du foyer jusqu'aux trottoirs et aux culs-de-sacs, en passant par les parcs du voisinage et les cours d'école et allant jusqu'aux parcs de la ville et aux centres récréatifs; et

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[2] Il s'agit là d'une position assez indulgente, surtout si on la compare aux critères équivalents ou aux lois existant en Suède ou au Danemark. Pour obtenir plus de renseignements concernant la LNH ainsi que les lois de la Suède et du Danemark, veuillez consulter dans ce rapport le travail de Steen B. Esbensen: "Les aires de jeux pour enfants dans le milieu d'habitation: Législations et lignes directrices".

2. une action coopérative entre divers paliers de gouvernement et les nombreux ministères ou agences, tels logement, loisirs, planification et éducation.

Il paraît toutefois très clair qu'il faut procéder à une rééducation des gens quant aux besoins qu'ont les enfants d'avoir accès aux jeux. Et il faut aussi enseigner des méthodes de mise en application. Cette tâche a autant d'importance que celle d'établir des lois. Une combinaison judicieuse de législation et de connaissance du sujet pourra constituer la meilleure formule pour répondre aux besoins des enfants en matière de jeux, pour leur en faciliter l'accès.

ANNEXE: ENONCES DE POLITIQUE INTERNATIONAUX SUR LES AIRES DE JEUX

L'Association internationale des terrains de jeux, fondée en 1961, s'intéresse à ce que les enfants aient accès au jeu et que ce jeu leur soit profitable. L'Association s'intéresse vivement à conserver une planification globale du milieu dans lequel l'enfant pourra jouer et elle en fait un objectif, au nom de l'enfant. Lors des congrès internationaux tri-annuels de l'Association, les résolutions suivantes ont été adoptées et devraient rentrer en ligne de compte au moment d'élaborer les politiques d'urbanisme municipal.

1. Les écoles possèdent souvent des équipements de valeur qui appartiennent à la municipalité et qui pourraient être utilisés toute l'année et à toute heure. On devrait encourager toutes les formes de coopération entre les autorités scolaires et les autorités responsables des activités récréatives. Lors de la conception de nouvelles écoles, on devrait y prévoir des installations récréatives et culturelles afin que la communauté puisse s'en servir davantage. (Zurich, 1964)

2. Tous les aspects du jeu et du développement de l'enfant doivent être inclus dans les programmes d'étude des architectes, urbanistes, paysagistes, éducateurs, animateurs de jeux, personnel hospitalier, toute personne dont un aspect quelconque du travail consiste à s'occuper d'enfants. (Paris 1969 - Milan 1975)

3. Les gouvernements et les autorités locales devraient chercher à développer les terrains d'aventure qui doivent être en relation avec tous les autres espaces de jeu, les autres types des terrains de jeux, et les zones de plein air dans les parcs publics. (Vienne, 1972)

4. Les gouvernements et autorités locales devraient prendre en considération la vie extra-scolaire de l'enfant aussi sérieusement que l'éducation scolaire, la construction des routes, les terrains de stationnement, et le traitement des eaux usées. (Vienne, 1972)

5. Le gouvernement à tous les niveaux doit, par de nouvelles lois ou par l'application de lois existantes, exiger que l'on intègre la création d'espaces de jeux dans toutes les zones de construction de nouveaux logements et de redéveloppement, et cela au niveau du projet. (Milan, 1975)

6. Il est impérieux que les gouvernements conservent des espaces naturels de jeu. (Milan, 1975)

7. Afin d'améliorer la qualité et d'étendre la variété des facilités de jeux pour les enfants, et parce que le terrain d'aventure cherche à développer en eux le sens de la responsabilité comportant un élément de risque, les gouvernements doivent changer leur législation sur la responsabilité publique ou l'interpréter d'une façon plus libérale. (Milan, 1975)

8. Chaque équipe chargée des projets de construction de logement et d'aménagement de zones à remettre en valeur, devrait comprendre une personne qui connaisse les besoins des enfants. (Milan, 1975)

9. Pour le jeu de l'enfant, et ses activités extérieures, nous devons prendre en considération l'environnement dans sa totalité et pas seulement les parcs et les terrains de jeux. (Ottawa, 1978)

10. Nous devons assurer à l'enfant l'accès en toute sécurité, et sans le contrôle constant de l'adulte à un environnement diversifié et ouvert, sans coupure avec son logement. (Ottawa, 1978)

11. Cet environnement diversifié doit inclure tous les aspects de la vie quotidienne de la communauté adulte, ainsi que l'environnement naturel et construit. (Ottawa, 1978)

12. Les processus de planification, de conception et de gestion de l'environnement devraient inclure la participation de toute la communauté intéressée, y compris les enfants. Tous les professionnels intéressés doivent travailler à ce niveau pour encourager la communauté à se prendre en charge. (Ottawa, 1978)

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UN ENDROIT POUR VIVRE, UN ENDROIT POUR GRANDIR: LA PLACE QUE L'ONTARIO FAIT AU DROIT DE JOUER DE L'ENFANT

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En ma qualité de conseillère en services récréatifs auprès du ministère des Affaires culturelles et des Loisirs de l'Ontario, j'ai passé une bonne partie de mon temps, au cours des cinq ou six dernières années, à aider des pouvoirs et des organismes municipaux, régionaux et provinciaux à acquérir et aménager des terrains devant servir d'aires de jeux pour enfants. J'estime qu'il faut offrir de bons cadres de jeux à tous les enfants, et s'y employer. Dans cet exposé, je vais m'entretenir de certaines des choses passionnantes accomplies en Ontario.

Mon expérience m'a convaincue que les paliers supérieurs du gouvernement ont un rôle à jouer si l'on veut voir réaliser dans les communautés en plein essor des progrès traduisant une réceptivité aux besoins des enfants qui y vivent. Je tiens à me pencher sur la manière dont le gouvernement de l'Ontario a facilité les changements en train de survenir à travers la province, en ce qui concerne l'aménagement de bonnes aires de jeux dans les communautés. Je vais également indiquer le genre de personnes qui ont contribué à ces changements.

ORGANISATION

Permettez-moi de passer tout d'abord très brièvement en revue l'organisation du gouvernement de l'Ontario. Il y a 21 ministères, qui se sont vus chacun charger de l'un de trois domaines de politique. Ces domaines sont la politique judiciaire, la politique sociale et la politique en matière de ressources. Le domaine de la politique sociale incombe au ministère des Affaires culturelles et des Loisirs, dont je fais partie, ainsi qu'à ceux de la Santé, de l'Education, des Collèges et Universités, et des Services sociaux et communautaires. Le principal accent des services à l'enfance porte dans le domaine de la politique sociale. Toutefois, il convient de souligner qu'environ 17 des 21 ministères ont certaines responsabilités dans le domaine des loisirs et donc un certain contrôle sur les programmes intéressant l'enfance.

Le groupement des ministères par domaines de politique a facilité les communications et la co-planification entre ceux oeuvrant dans le même secteur, mais il reste des problèmes de communication entre ceux chargés de domaines différents. Le ministère des Richesses naturelles, par exemple, travaille dans celui de la politique en matière de ressources; il lui incombe

notamment d'aider les municipalités à aménager des parcs à caractère très naturel. Que ce palier de gouvernement provincial ait beaucoup de choses en commun avec notre ministère est évident, mais comme nous opérons dans les domaines de politique différents, les communications en souffrent parfois car l'un s'occupe principalement des richesses naturelles et l'autre du développement social.

On peut s'attendre à ce que l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant pose certains problèmes, étant donné qu'il ne relève pas précisément d'un ministère ou même d'un domaine de politique. A cet égard, notre situation n'est pas unique. Les communications semblent être un problème universel, qui déborde les frontières politiques et culturelles. Comme n'importe qui d'autre, nous continuons à travailler dessus et il convient de préciser que cela ne nous a pas empêchés de faire des progrès dans la voie de l'aménagement de meilleures aires de jeux à travers toute la province.

Pour ce qui est du ministère des Affaires culturelles et des Loisirs proprement dit, son rôle consiste, aux termes de l'acte législatif qui l'a institué, à:

> "promouvoir un bon civisme par le développement de services culturels et récréatifs, notamment
>
> a) préserver et entretenir l'héritage culturel des résidents de l'Ontario en tenant pleinement compte de leurs diverses traditions et origines;
>
> b) aider à profiter des avantages de la condition civique et à participer activement à la vie culturelle et récréative de la province;
>
> c) promouvoir des nouvelles formes d'expression culturelle et le principe de l'excellence individuelle et communautaire."

Une modification apportée par la suite à la loi précise certains règlements que le ministère est habilité à passer pour atteindre les objectifs initialement fixés.

La loi initiale ou modifiée ne fait pas expressément mention des enfants. Le ministère est appelé à assurer des services et des activités à tous les citoyens de l'Ontario, y compris les enfants. Ceci dit, j'aimerais passer en revue les services et activités lancés par le ministère, qui ont trait au problème de l'espace urbain pour l'enfant.

WINTARIO

Comme il est très populaire et bien connu dans toute la province, je parlerai tout d'abord du programme Wintario. Grâce aux subventions Wintario, des communautés locales ont pu acquérir des terrains récréatifs et se lancer dans des projets d'aménagement qu'elles n'auraient peut-être pas pu se permettre sans cela. Responsabilité de notre ministère, la Wintario est une lotterie provinciale qui fonctionne maintenant depuis quatre ans.

L'argent qui provient de la vente des billets au grand public sert, d'après des critères d'appréciation bien précis, à cofinancer des projets culturels ou récréatifs valables, au niveau communautaire.

Depuis qu'elle a été instituée, la Wintario a permis de financer l'aménagement d'une multitude d'aires de jeux dans toute la province, certaines très modestes (moins de 1000 dollars sollicités), d'autres plus élaborées (au-delà de 35 000 dollars sollicités). Le montant exact du cofinancement dépend de la somme que parvient à mobiliser la communauté.

Le solliciteur-type est l'association communautaire reliée à une école élémentaire. Les parents, préoccupés par la platitude de la cour d'école et le manque de possibilités de jeu intéressantes et satisfaisantes pour leurs enfants, entreprennent de mobiliser des fonds et sollicitent l'aide de la Wintario pour pouvoir acheter du matériel et équiper un terrain de jeux ou construire des installations et aménager l'aire eux-mêmes. Si le projet ne semble pas bien conçu, le ministère conseille le groupement et l'aide dans la planification. Avant l'approbation de la subvention, des réaménagements peuvent même être exigés.

Un projet particulièrement intéressant cofinancé par la Wintario a été récemment mené à bien à l'Ecole Sunnyview de Toronto. Une cour d'école, auparavant inaccessible, a été convertie en un cadre de jeu et d'apprentissage attirant pour les élèves physiquement handicapés. Pendant des années, elle était restée une aire séduisante mais inutilisable pour les enfants confinés à une chaise roulante. Un comité composé de parents, de professeurs, de représentants du conseil scolaire et d'agents du ministère a alors conçu un aménagement original qui a été réalisé par la suite. Une subvention Wintario a couvert le tiers du coût global qui s'est chiffré à environ 100 000 dollars. A souligner ici que des projets mettant des installations récréatives à la portée des handicapés physiques ont été entièrement financés par le biais de la Wintario.

CENTRE-RESSOURCE

Même éclairés, des groupements projetant un usage créatif d'espaces pour l'enfant peuvent avoir du mal à se procurer de la documentation. Les bibliothèques publiques peuvent être un excellent point de départ pour les recherches, mais peu d'entre elles sont suffisamment fournies pour les besoins de ces groupements. Cela fait quelques années maintenant que notre ministère met à la disposition du public une bibliothèque ouverte cinq jours par semaine, de 8h30 à 17h. Nous participons au système des prêts entre bibliothèques publiques; les résidents de l'Ontario peuvent consulter nos ouvrages soit directement, soit en se les faisant envoyer par la poste, soit en utilisant le système des prêts inter-bibliothèques. Il existe des ouvrages, des brochures, des revues, des films et des documents audio-visuels sur des sujets comme la théorie du jeu, le développement de l'enfant, l'aménagement des aires de jeux, l'handicapé et le jeu, la formation d'animateurs de jeux et le jeu dans des cadres particuliers.

Le ministère constitue à l'intention du centre d'information la documentation qui s'impose sur les sujets ou problèmes devenant d'un grand intérêt. Ainsi, on a souvent soulevé la question de la sécurité des terrains de jeux à partir du moment où de plus en plus de communautés ont souhaité aménager de meilleurs cadres de jeux pour les enfants. Le ministère a alors organisé un projet de recherche pour déterminer dans quelle mesure les aires de jeux régulières étaient vraiment sûres et publié les résultats, disponibles auprès du centre d'information. De même, une enquête sur l'utilisation hivernale des parcs urbains ontariens, y compris les aires de jeux, a été réalisée; on peut également se procurer une copie du rapport auprès du centre d'information.

SERVICES

Des conseillers au service du ministère, tant à Toronto que dans nos bureaux régionaux, sont là pour venir en aide aux autorités, organisations et associations communautaires locales qui peuvent se soucier de l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. Les 135 agents régionaux du ministère offrent un premier recours aux communautés qui souhaitent faire quelque chose dans ce sens. Suivant la nature de la démarche, le conseiller régional peut alors faire appel à un ou plusieurs experts-conseils de Toronto pour un supplément d'information et d'aide.

J'aimerais illustrer à l'aide d'un exemple comment on procède. Il y a plusieurs mois, le bureau régional de Windsor a demandé mon aide. Une association communautaire d'un vieux quartier de cette ville tente d'attirer l'attention du public et des autorités sur le manque sérieux de véritables aires de jeux pour les enfants. Grâce à sa connaissance de la communauté et des personnalités en cause, le conseiller régional a pu conseiller l'association sur la façon de procéder, la marche à suivre pour avoir l'appui du public et les autres organisations ou personnes du coin susceptibles d'aider. Il m'a demandé conseil sur l'espace pouvant être mis à la disposition des enfants, la façon dont il pourrait être utilisé et le genre de ressources - humaines, financières et documentaires - susceptibles d'être exploitées. Vu l'ampleur du projet, le conseiller régional et moi-même prévoyons travailler étroitement dessus au cours des deux prochaines années. Il se peut que l'on fasse appel à d'autres experts-conseils si la chose semble s'imposer.

FORMATION D'ANIMATEURS

Le ministère mise à fond sur la formation d'animateurs. Il cherche à consolider les associations et organisations locales, régionales et provinciales s'occupant des problèmes de l'enfant et du jeu, en les aidant à améliorer leurs ressources humaines et matérielles. Il encourage également la formation d'experts, qu'il s'agisse de spécialistes à plein temps ou de volontaires.

Dans ce sens, le ministère a organisé et financé deux conférences provinciales et vingt-cinq ateliers et colloques régionaux sur le thème du jeu depuis 1973. Il a collaboré en outre avec d'autres ministères, comme ceux de l'Education et des Services communautaires et sociaux, à la

mise sur pied de stages de perfectionnement professionnel internes, portant sur le jeu et l'aménagement des aires de jeux. Il a aussi aidé des organismes bénévoles comme les Guides, la Y.W.C.A. et la Ontario Camping Association à mettre sur pied des stages semblables à l'intention de leurs volontaires membres.

EXPERIENCE '79

Ces dernières années, le gouvernement provincial a lancé un programme d'emplois d'été pour étudiants, afin d'aider des communautés et des organisations à embaucher des étudiants aux fins de projets communautaires valables. Il reçoit chaque année de services récréatifs et pédagogiques municipaux au moins 20 soumissions concernant l'aménagement ou l'amélioration d'aires de jeux. Ces projets sont très différents, mais les étudiants qui y travaillent ont accès à toutes les ressources du ministère; parfois, leurs réalisations sont assez remarquables après les 10 à 14 semaines d'emploi.

IMPACT DES ACTIVITES MINISTERIELLES

a) Réseaux

Les activités du ministère ont eu un effet positif et, si je peux dire, notable. Notamment, nous avons aidé à constituer des réseaux de gens qui s'emploient à améliorer les cadres de jeu urbains. Ces groupements à caractère interdisciplinaire, qui n'existaient pas il y a sept ans, contribuent aujourd'hui à modifier l'attitude du public et des autorités en ce qui concerne l'importance du jeu.

Permettez-moi de citer trois exemples de groupements de ce genre. La Northwestern Ontario Play Team (l'Equipe du jeu du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario) se compose d'environ 20 personnes qui se réunissent deux fois par mois à Thunder Bay. Elle comprend des pédagogues, des urbanistes, des préposés municipaux aux loisirs, des agents d'organismes sociaux, des personnes travaillant avec des enfants handicapés, des parents et des agents régionaux du ministère. Le groupement a été constitué en 1973, à la suite d'une conférence de 4 jours sur le jeu, organisée par notre ministère suivant les modalités suivantes: chaque délégué a été sélectionné d'avance et invité au sein d'une équipe régionale, dans l'espoir de créer des retombées dans les localités représentées. Le ministère a payé les frais des participants qui, en retour, se sont engagés pour un an à servir la cause de l'enfant et du jeu dans leurs communautés. Toutes ces personnes ont rempli leur mandat. Six ans après, l'équipe existe toujours, même si sa composition est complètement différente. Elle conseille les communautés de la vaste région nord-ouest de la province sur les programmes de jeux, l'animation des jeux et l'aménagement d'aires de jeux. Le ministère octroie chaque année une subvention de 1000 dollars pour financer les déplacements des membres dans les localités les plus isolées.

Un deuxième exemple est celui de l'équipe consultative en matière de jeu du Comté de Waterloo (centre-sud de l'Ontario), créée en 1974.

Après avoir rencontré les conseillers en éducation physique du conseil scolaire du Comté de Waterloo, j'ai accepté de faire devant les directeurs d'écoles élémentaires du comté un exposé sur les possibilités offertes par leurs cours d'écoles. Les idées ont été bien accueillies et un comité a été formé pour promouvoir leur application. Ce comité, initialement composé de pédagogues du niveau élémentaire, s'est bientôt élargi pour inclure des préposés municipaux aux loisirs, des urbanistes communautaires, des parents, ainsi que des représentants et des étudiants de facultés d'éducation préscolaire et primaire, d'éducation physique et d'aménagement paysager.

Avec l'expérience, l'équipe a élargi le champ de ses activités. Maintenant, elle tient des ateliers de perfectionnement professionnel en aménagement d'aires de jeux à l'intention de professeurs du niveau élémentaire, conseille les écoles et les services municipaux des parcs et des loisirs du comté sur l'aménagement des aires de jeux, organise des cours d'éducation publique sur le jeu et les cadres de jeux, aide les étudiants qui font des recherches sur le jeu et s'occupe d'un centre régional d'information ouvert à quiconque s'intéresse au problème du jeu chez l'enfant et de l'aménagement d'aires de jeux. Par son financement, le ministère a facilité au cours des cinq dernières années la mise sur pied du centre-ressource et l'organisation des cours d'éducation publique.

Enfin, il y a l'ancien Action Committee on Play (Comité d'action pour le jeu), connu maintenant sous le nom de Play On. Depuis 1973 s'est développée en Ontario une organisation composée principalement de spécialistes en loisirs, qui s'est employée à influencer l'action des responsables des parcs et des loisirs dans le domaine de l'enfance et du jeu. Le ministère en a toujours été un élément clé. Le groupement vise principalement à offrir des possibilités d'apprentissage aux agents et volontaires s'occupant des parcs et des loisirs, et à promouvoir une démarche interdisciplinaire dans les services assurés aux enfants.

Sous le nom de Comité d'action pour le jeu, le groupement a organisé et dirigé des ateliers dans le cadre des conférences annuelles des diverses organisations provinciales s'occupant des parcs et des loisirs (l'Ontario Recreation Society, l'Ontario Parks Association, l'Ontario Camping Association, la Society of Directors of Municipal Recreation in Ontario): il a aidé le ministère à organiser une conférence provinciale sur le jeu intitulée The Play Explosion, tenue en 1976; ses membres ont aidé à mettre sur pied le programme 1978 de l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux, à Ottawa. Et à l'heure actuelle, sous le nouveau nom de Play On, il prépare 10 ateliers en prévision d'une conférence nationale de l'Association canadienne des Loisirs et des Parcs.

b) Nouveau visage des aires de jeux

Dans toute la province, même les plus petites communautés, les cours d'école et les terrains de jeux réguliers des parcs municipaux ont changé de visage. Même si bien des aménagements sont encore presque uniquement axés sur les jeux physiques, d'autres font place aux besoins sociaux, affectifs et intellectuels de l'enfant. Cette évolution traduit, me semble-t-il, une prise de conscience du fait qu'il existe des alternatives aux

solutions traditionnelles d'aménagement des terrains de jeux. Deux projets auxquels nous avons participé dans la région de Toronto constituent d'excellents modèles dont pourraient s'inspirer d'autres communautés.

A l'école communautaire de Dewson, un terrain de jeux en asphalte, nu et sans attraits, a été converti en une aire d'enchantement pour l'enfant, avec de la terre, des buttes couvertes d'arbres, du bois pour grimper, une mare où patauger, un jardin potager utilisé à l'année par la communauté et un terrain de tennis pour adultes. Le terrain de jeux est le centre d'attraction du quartier - c'est là que tout se passe.

Voilà maintenant six ans qu'existe le terrain de jeux d'aventure au Parc Harbourfront. Initialement lancé comme un projet pilote par la Société centrale d'hypothèques et de logement, grâce aux efforts de Polly Hill[1], le terrain de jeux d'aventure a survécu contre vents et marées et constitue un excellent rappel que les enfants ont droit à du choix et de la variété dans les aires de jeux aménagées pour eux.

NOUVEAUX BESOINS ET SECTEURS PEU AVANCES

J'ai dressé jusqu'à présent un tableau plutôt rose de ce qui se fait dans la province pour l'enfance et les aires de jeux en ville. Il faut dire que beaucoup de choses ont été accomplies ces dernières années grâce à la tenacité de bien des gens. Cependant, il reste encore d'importants secteurs de lacunes, où l'on n'a réalisé pas ou que peu de progrès.

Ainsi, le droit au jeu de l'enfant n'est garanti ni dans la Loi sur l'aménagement, qui régit l'urbanisme municipal en Ontario, ni dans la plupart des plans municipaux officiels. En conséquence, dans toute la province, on voit prendre constamment des décisions en matière d'utilisation des terrains qui traduisent un manque d'appréciation et de compréhension de l'importance du jeu pour l'enfant. Ces décisions, notamment, éliminent des aires de jeux non structurées, qui occupent une place spéciale dans le cadre de jeu.

Les élus municipaux perpétuent dans une large mesure cette tendance. Le gouvernement de l'Ontario a actuellement pour politique d'encourager les pouvoirs locaux à prendre de plus en plus la responsabilité des aménagements locaux et les décisions concernant l'utilisation des terrains. En conséquence, le genre de cadre de jeu disponible dans une communauté dépend finalement de l'attitude et de la connaissance de l'homme politique du coin. C'est pourquoi un projet en cours est de mieux faire apprécier et comprendre à ce groupe de décisionnaires pourquoi l'enfant joue et combien il est important de prendre des décisions judicieuses en sa faveur quand il s'agit d'exploiter et d'aménager les terrains disponibles dans une communauté. En Ontario, le problème de rendre ces décisionnaires réceptifs aux besoins de l'enfant se complique du fait que tous les deux ans il y a des élections et la nécessité de former un nouveau groupe de responsables.

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[1] Voir dans ce rapport "Organiser des possibilités de jeux pour l'enfant", par Polly Hill.

La géographie de l'Ontario pose également certains problèmes. La province est gigantesque; elle s'étend sur 1000 milles d'est en ouest, sur 1000 milles du nord au sud. Sa superficie est presque celle de la France, de l'Allemagne et de l'Italie réunies. La majorité de ses 7 millions d'habitants vivent dans une étroite bande située juste au nord de la frontière américaine; c'est la région la plus prospère de la province, où sont concentrées les ressources, les compétences, mais pas les besoins: on les retrouve dans toute la province.

Nous sommes une nation bilingue, mais seuls quelques-uns de nos documents sont disponibles en français. Et qu'en est-il des 68 autres groupes ethniques de la province? Nos villes hébergent maintenant d'importantes communautés de gens provenant d'autres pays où les attitudes envers le jeu et l'utilisation des espaces libres publics diffèrent. Les institutions publiques existantes ne savent pas encore comment servir ces couches de notre société, mais les besoins de celles-ci n'en sont pas moins réels.

Compte tenu de notre situation en Ontario, je suis fermement convaincue que sans l'étroite participation du palier supérieur de gouvernement, c'est-à-dire du gouvernement provincial, nous ne parviendrons pas à faire beaucoup de progrès dans la façon dont, en tant que société, nous aménageons l'espace urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. Cette participation est absolument indispensable en raison de la géographie, de la taille et des disparités régionales de la province, mais doit se faire sous forme d'une collaboration avec les groupes d'intérêt pertinents.

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L'INFLUENCE DU MILIEU SUR LA SANTE DE L'ENFANT

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Protéger et améliorer la santé publique, allonger la durée de la vie et prolonger les années de productivité constituent d'importants objectifs de politique sociale pour le Parti communiste de l'Union soviétique; L.I. Breznev, le secrétaire général, a déclaré au XXVe congrès du parti: "Il n'est pas de tâche sociale plus importante que préserver la santé du peuple soviétique."

La recherche médicale devient donc très importante. Les principaux sujets d'étude sont la santé de groupes de gens et les facteurs environnementaux l'influençant. Ces recherches sont nécessaires pour la planification scientifique des mesures préventives et hygiéniques, et leur évaluation. La compréhension des grands changements survenant dans la santé des gens sous l'influence d'un ensemble complexe de facteurs environnementaux va autoriser des prédictions qui permettront à leur tour de réviser comme il se doit les plans économiques nationaux.

Les recherches sur la santé publique s'orientent dans deux grandes voies:

1. la vulgarisation des données recueillies par les médecins et les hygiénistes dans le courant de leurs activités, et des résultats des recherches globales, ou des contrôles, qu'ils effectuent;
2. l'étude de groupes relativement restreints, mais représentatifs, par l'analyse clinique et en laboratoire.

Le fruit d'un grand nombre de projets de recherche a servi de fondement à une législation fixant des normes et faisant des recommandations aux organismes de santé publique afin de protéger et d'améliorer la santé du peuple soviétique. Aujourd'hui, la tâche la plus importante de l'hygiéniste est de déterminer les tendances régulières que suivent les changements intervenant à l'heure actuelle et à long terme dans la santé des gens.

De nouvelles tâches, et des changements socio-économiques, nécessitent l'adoption de démarches systématiques pour étudier l'influence du milieu sur les changements intervenant dans la santé de la population. Ces recherches s'appuient sur l'observation statistique. Les méthodes utilisées pour le recueil des données doivent cadrer avec l'objet de la recherche, et les indices retenus refléter convenablement l'influence du milieu sur la santé publique.

Par principe, pour évaluer l'influence d'un certain aspect du milieu, on choisit pour l'étude des sujets soumis au maximum au facteur considéré. De cette façon, on détermine l'ampleur de l'influence de ce seul facteur (l'effet de causalité).

En revanche, un tel choix ne s'impose pas quand on analyse l'influence d'un ensemble complexe de facteurs environnementaux. Au contraire, les groupes de population considérés doivent être étudiés à fond sur une longue période. Cette dernière considération est particulièrement importante, dans la mesure où les études en question ne peuvent qu'être dynamiques (longitudinales ou semi-longitudinales). Les femmes et les enfants passent pour le groupe qui convient le mieux à l'évaluation de l'ampleur des interactions entre la société et le milieu. Leur étude nous permet de déterminer avec une assez bonne précision les chances de développement de l'ensemble de la société à laquelle ils appartiennent.

Des examens médicaux annuels sont très importants pour apprécier l'état de santé des enfants. Aujourd'hui, les résultats servent aussi bien à découvrir ceux qui ont besoin de soins qu'à organiser le réseau d'installations de traitement. Pour qu'ils puissent servir à évaluer l'influence du milieu sur la santé de la population, il faut trouver un moyen systématique d'effectuer de tels examens. Il s'agit également d'étudier d'une manière commune les cohortes considérées.

Dernièrement, un certain nombre d'auteurs (N.A. Vinogradov, V. Georgievskij, A.M. Merkov, L.E. Poljakov et d'autres) ont proposé divers moyens plus compliqués d'évaluer la santé publique, essentiellement d'après ces critères sanitaires propres aux différents groupes de population (âge, sexe, profession, etc.). On préconise une évaluation complexe de l'incidence au moyen de:

1. tables d'évaluation, d'après des indices par ordre d'importance;
2. alogrithmes servant à un complexe calcul des probabilités pour les principaux indices d'incidence, les principales classes, catégories, et formes de maladies, d'après une comparaison par niveau (A.M. Merkov et L.E. Poljakov).

Très importante est l'évaluation complexe des indices sanitaires, non pour des individus mais des ensembles de populations. Un des moyens systématiques permettant ce genre d'évaluation est la division en catégories, regroupant des gens ayant le même état de santé et la même capacité de travail.

Le regroupement démographique du point de vue de la médecine et de la santé publique n'est pas une idée nouvelle et est pratiqué dans un certain nombre de pays. Le plus souvent, le classement a une origine sociale. On peut citer comme exemples les classements utilisés lors de l'incorporation des nouvelles recrues dans l'armée et les groupements effectués d'après les aptitudes physiques. En U.R.S.S., on utilise trois catégories de ce genre dans les écoles: la fondamentale, la préparatoire et la spéciale.

En France, il existe quatre catégories de ce genre, dont le nom dit tout: les bons, aptes et admis; les cas à observer, requérant apparemment des tâches plus légères; les provisoirement inaptes; les totalement inaptes.

Il existe aussi des classements qui ne visent pas des fins pratiques et reposent sur la notion de la présence et de la gravité de maladies (Rozhdero, suivant P.V. Kolarov). Pour les enfants d'âge scolaire, on a proposé des catégories correspondant principalement au degré d'observation et d'assistance médicales requis. Le classement officiel suivant est utilisé en République démocratique allemande:

Catégorie 1: Elle comprend les enfants dont le développement cadre avec l'âge, et qui démontrent des progrès moyens ou bons et un comportement normal.

Catégorie 2: Elle se divise en deux sous-catégories:

a) les enfants qui requièrent une attention médicale spéciale à court terme;
b) les enfants qui requièrent l'attention prolongée de spécialistes médicaux, mais peuvent néanmoins fréquenter l'école publique.

Catégorie 3: Elle comprend les enfants souffrant de désordres physiques et mentaux, incapables d'être éduqués dans les écoles publiques régulières (M. Broynung).

Ce mode de classement, quoiqu'utile, ne peut pas être considéré entièrement comme un système d'évaluation de la santé, car la Catégorie 2 s'appuie dans une large mesure sur des critères non médicaux, mais socio-économiques: elle inclut, entre autres, les enfants socialement négligés et les piètres élèves.

Le Centre international de l'enfance recommande pour sa part le classement suivant:

1. ceux qui se sentent bien
2. ceux qui se portent bien
3. ceux qui sont légèrement malades
4. ceux qui sont convalescents
5. ceux qui sont malades

Ce classement n'est pas pratique et ne tient compte ni des possibilités fonctionnelles, ni du degré d'aptitude sociale des enfants en bonne santé et malades.

L'Institut de recherche sur l'hygiène de l'enfance et de l'adolescence, du ministère soviétique de la Santé publique, est en train d'arrêter des méthodes et des principes pour l'étude de la santé de l'enfant en relation avec le milieu. Par suite d'un effort de création collectif, il a été mis au point un système de classement des enfants en fonction de leur

état de santé, qui permette de les grouper suivant l'attention médicale qu'ils requièrent et leur aptitude à travailler. Cinq catégories sont prévues:

La Catégorie 1 comprend les enfants normaux n'ayant pas de maladies chroniques, étant fonctionnellement normaux du point de vue des systèmes étudiés et connaissant un développement physique normal.

La Catégorie 2 englobe les enfants en bonne santé présentant certaines anomalies morpho-fonctionnelles. Cela comprend ceux avec des défauts de posture, une légère myopie, des anomalies physiques non d'origine endocrinienne et des défauts esthétiques n'entravant pas leur vie sociale (par exemple, l'absence de doigts). Cela inclut également les enfants normaux dont la santé est menacée en raison d'anormalités physiques ou de conditions de vie, et qui exigent une plus grande attention médicale et pédagogique (comme ceux soignés pour rhumatismes, tuberculose ou maladies neuro-psychiatriques), et ceux qui se fatiguent facilement en raison de troubles alimentaires. Les enfants qui souffrent de maux de tête ou qui sont malades plus de quatre fois par an figurent aussi dans cette catégorie.

La Catégorie 3 comprend les enfants avec des maladies chroniques en rémission, par exemple des maladies rhumatismales jugulées, des angines chroniques sans complications, des pyélonéphrites ou cholécystites chroniques.

La Catégorie 4 englobe les enfants avec des maladies chroniques en rechute et en cours de traitement, qui ne sont cependant pas sérieusement affectés et continuent à fréquenter des écoles publiques régulières et d'autres établissements pour enfants.

La Catégorie 5 inclut les enfants avec des maladies chroniques qui ne répondent pas aux soins. Ils n'entrent presque jamais dans les contrôles médicaux généraux car ils sont d'ordinaire incapables de fréquenter une école régulière à quel que niveau que ce soit.

L'avantage de ce système réside dans le fait que le classement d'un enfant dans l'une ou l'autre catégorie traduit son degré d'aptitude à travailler. Avoir un groupe d'enfants en observation permet de situer le degré d'aptitude à travailler du groupe tout entier. Les modes de classement conventionnels donnent des renseignements décousus sur les divers aspects de la santé pris isolément, sans tenir compte de leur conjugaison; ils indiquent d'ordinaire l'incidence générale, la prédominance de certains problèmes et la fréquence d'anomalies dans, par exemple, le développement physique. Le système proposé, par contre, expose les particularités de la santé infantile d'une manière intégrée: tous les critères sont pris en considération dans chaque catégorie.

Ce système peut servir à dégager les grands changements intervenant dans la santé des gens sous l'influence du milieu. Nous pouvons construire un modèle mathématique qui va nous permettre d'illustrer cette corrélation en utilisant des données démographiques pour calculer les probabilités de certains phénomènes, faire passer certains groupes d'une catégorie

de santé dans une autre et déterminer l'espérance de vie. L'avantage réside dans le fait que les probabilités peuvent se calculer en usant alternativement d'indices qui se complètent (psychologiques et biochimiques, par exemple), ce que ne permettent pas les méthodes conventionnelles. Voilà pourquoi le système de classement susmentionné nous apparaît comme l'une des solutions remédiant vraiment au problème de la prévision des changements survenant dans la santé des gens sous l'influence du milieu.

L'expérience montre que la dynamique du processus par lequel des problèmes de santé surviennent dans des groupes peut s'illustrer au moyen d'un diagramme qui fait ressortir l'étroite interaction entre les phénomènes entrant dans le façonnement de la santé des gens, et ne diffère pas en soi de la courbe de la mortalité des âges. L'analyse de tels diagrammes pour une série de générations pourrait montrer les corrélations entre conditions sanitaires et environnementales; les tendances qui se dégagent peuvent indiquer si les maladies s'estompent ou reviennent, et si la résistance et l'accoutumance des groupes touchés sont suffisantes ou non.

Cette méthode est assez discriminatoire et peut s'employer dans l'étude de l'influence du milieu sur la santé. Elle peut servir à construire un modèle démographique idéal du point de vue de la santé publique. Elle repose sur l'idée que les particularités humaines, comme les particularités naturelles, se forment dans une certaine mesure suivant les principes de l'évolution, et que la perpétuation au fil des générations d'une particularité d'une population peut témoigner de l'adaptation de ces générations au milieu. Il importe de souligner que toute étude de ce genre ne peut pas prétendre être valable à un niveau global. La meilleure application semble être au niveau régional. Le genre de région convenant au type d'étude décrite ici est celle où l'on peut déterminer la présence d'un certain facteur environnemental (ou ensemble de facteurs) et l'intensité de son influence.

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PROBLEMES ET POSSIBILITES POUR L'ENFANT DU BANGLADESH

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INTRODUCTION

En lançant l'Année internationale de l'enfant, les Nations Unies ont voulu sensibiliser les pays membres, ainsi que les organisations et les gens du monde entier, aux problèmes particuliers de l'enfance.

L'enfance est internationale. Des liens plus solides ont besoin d'être forgés entre tous les enfants du globe. Ces dernières années, on a vu s'intensifier les actions pour améliorer le bien-être, tant économique que socio-politique, des enfants. Cependant, malgré tous les efforts internationaux, un nombre alarmant d'entre eux reste encore privé des nécessités fondamentales, notamment dans les pays en développement comme le Bangladesh.

Projets et plans doivent s'appuyer sur des informations précises. A cet égard, je mentionnerai tout de suite qu'au Bangladesh les données et statistiques disponibles, notamment sur l'enfance, sont des plus réduites. J'ai utilisé pour ma part les plus récentes que nous ayons, fournies par le rapport de recensement du Bangladesh pour 1974; il se peut donc bien que les chiffres cités soient souvent très inférieurs à la réalité en 1979.

Cet exposé aurait dû s'appuyer sur des faits et des chiffres tirés d'une étude physique de toutes les régions urbaines du Bangladesh. Comme aucune étude de ce genre n'a été réalisée, il a fallu extrapoler à partir de publications et de références internationales.

LA SITUATION AU BANGLADESH

Le Bangladesh, classé parmi les pays en développement, est une des nations les plus pauvres au monde, avec un P.N.B. d'un peu plus de 100

dollars américains par habitant. Ce pays de 80 millions d'habitants pour une superficie de 55 598 milles carrés a une densité moyenne de population de 1438 habitants au mille carré. Seulement 8,8% environ de la population vit dans des régions urbaines, mais celles-ci sont très peuplées; l'important exode rural motivé par la recherche d'un emploi et des avantages de la vie moderne fait constamment pression sur les zones urbaines. Le taux d'alphabétisés est de 20%, et moins de 3% des citadins peuvent être considérés riches; les 97% restants entrent dans les catégories à revenu faible et moyen. Il nous incombe de mettre nos idées et nos ressources au service des besoins de ces 97%.[1]

Le gouvernement fait de gros efforts pour améliorer le sort des communautés rurales, dont l'agriculture constitue la principale activité. Le Bangladesh a vu son taux de citadins passer de 5,19 à 8,8% entre 1961 et 1974; il reste donc un pays essentiellement rural. Plus de 91% de ses habitants vivent dans des villages: si l'on exclut le Népal (4% de citadins), il est le pays le moins urbanisé de la région.[2]

Dans le tiers-monde, le pourcentage d'enfants ayant jusqu'à 14 ans est très élevé. En fait, une énorme proportion de ceux actuellement éduqués dans les pays en développement ne parviendra jamais sur le marché du travail ou n'y restera que peu de temps. On prévoit qu'en 1985 le nombre des enfants de moins de 14 ans dans le monde aura augmenté de 450 millions environ, dont 400 millions pour les régions moins développées.

Au Bangladesh, le nombre des enfants urbains atteint 2,3 millions environ, c'est-à-dire à peu près 33% de toute la population citadine.[3] On prévoit qu'il atteindra les 3 millions en 1985.

LES BESOINS DE L'ENFANCE AU BANGLADESH

L'enfance est l'épine dorsale d'une nation. Les enfants d'aujourd'hui sont les citoyens de demain. L'avenir d'un pays dépend en bonne partie de la formulation d'une stratégie judicieuse pour promouvoir le développement de l'enfant et l'aider à devenir un adulte utile. Contrarier l'épanouissement de nos enfants revient à saper la structure sociale. C'est pour le salut de cette enfance urbaine, d'aujourd'hui et de demain, et pour remédier aux carences passées, que des pays en développement comme le Bangladesh doivent faire attention à l'utilisation du terrain dans leurs régions urbaines. Il faut prévoir, au niveau de l'aménagement, des logements et des installations récréatives, des écoles, des bibliothèques et des cliniques, ainsi que des institutions spéciales pour les groupes d'enfants défavorisés.

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1 Annuaire démographique des Nations Unies, 1974.

2 UNICEF Publication Bangladesh, 1979. Asia 1979 Year Book, Far Eastern Review.

3 Bangladesh Population Census Report, 1974.

1. Logements et installations récréatives

Le logement est un problème universel dans le tiers-monde; il fait gravement défaut dans les villes. Dans la plupart des pays en développement, les conditions d'habitation en ville ont nettement empiré au cours des dix dernières années. Cela tient principalement au rapide essor démographique, à l'exode rural et à la stagnation de la production nationale, qui affecte directement la construction de logements. On ne dispose que de données générales, trop réduites, sur le logement urbain au Bangladesh. Même si l'on sait que les conditions de logement existant dans le secteur privé sont loin d'être satisfaisantes et qu'un assez grand nombre de familles urbaines n'a guère accès à des logis convenablement desservis, la situation au Bangladesh n'a pas encore atteint un seuil intolérable. Néanmoins, des milliers de citadins habitent des quartiers crasseux et des zones squatterisées, vivant dans des taudis construits avec des moyens de fortune et dépourvus des commodités et des services essentiels. Les enfants en pâtissent. A cause de la forte densité de population et du manque d'hygiène, d'installations sanitaires et d'eau potable, l'enfant des taudis est victime de diverses maladies contagieuses courantes dans les pays tropicaux. Comme remède, on peut préconiser d'améliorer ces quartiers insalubres, en éliminant si possible progressivement les taudis, et d'assurer aux habitants un minimum de commodités et de services; ou bien de réaménager les villes méthodiquement.

Comme la population des villes s'accroît et doit être logée dans les limites de la superficie urbaine, bien des pays choisissent de construire des grands immeubles. Singapour, pays d'une superficie de 220 milles carrés pour une population de 2,5 millions d'habitants, a réussi à loger 75% de sa population avec son programme de logements publics, et prévoit atteindre les 80% dès 1980; pour cela, il a construit des tours-appartements en raison de la superficie réduite disponible. Ces tours-appartements sont-elles ou non préjudiciables aux enfants? Concentrer un grand nombre d'enfants dans des complexes de grands immeubles peut créer des problèmes sociaux. Les parents des étages supérieurs sont généralement moins en mesure de surveiller leurs enfants. Les enfants de ces complexes s'exposent à des accidents de circulation, car dans la plupart des pays en développement il n'y a pas à proprement parler de discipline routière.

Cependant, peut-être que l'idée des grands immeubles ne peut pas être complètement écartée, du fait principalement des contraintes imposées par la superficie urbaine et du besoin croissant de logements. Au niveau de l'aménagement de tels complexes, il faut alors veiller tout particulièrement à ce que les intérêts des enfants n'en souffrent pas; il s'agit de prendre des dispositions convenables pour leur sécurité.

Au Bangladesh, les terrains de jeux, parcs, espaces libres et autres aménagements récréatifs sont très peu nombreux. Ce genre d'aménagement doit être une importante priorité dans les régions urbaines; il faut affecter à cette fin un strict pourcentage du terrain urbain utilisé.

2. Ecoles

Par suite de considérations économiques, de problèmes de superficie urbaine, et de l'absence d'une gestion et d'un contrôle convenables du terrain, les écoles au Bangladesh ont été situées au hasard, sans grand souci de commodité pour les enfants. Dans les régions urbaines, environ la moitié de ceux âgés de 10 à 14 ans et le tiers de ceux âgés de 5 à 9 ans[4] vont à l'école. Une fréquentation aussi faible peut s'expliquer par le fait que le Bangladesh a hérité un système pédagogique de l'époque coloniale, possède relativement peu d'expérience dans le domaine de l'éducation de masse, voit sa population citadine s'accroître rapidement et, surtout, consacre assez peu d'argent à l'éducation - de 10 à 15% seulement du budget national.

La récente introduction de l'éducation primaire pour tous va permettre de s'attaquer à l'une des causes profondes du sous-développement: l'analphabétisme. Les principaux obstacles à surmonter, toutefois, sont l'absence d'organisation et le manque de fonds. Le Conseil consultatif national de l'éducation, dans son rapport provisoire (janvier 1979), a préconisé une démarche communautaire consistant à associer les résidents de chaque localité au fonctionnement des écoles. L'organisation des écoles suivant le principe de la participation personnelle va rapprocher les citoyens de ces institutions.

3. Bibliothèques

Il y a quelques dizaines d'années, l'enfance s'intéressait surtout aux contes populaires et aux nouvelles; aujourd'hui, elle se passionne aussi pour les romans modernes, les revues scientifiques et autres publications semblables, qui sont généralement importés et vendus à un prix élevé. Le coût des livres est prohibitif pour l'enfant moyen, d'où la nécessité de créer des bibliothèques où il puisse s'en procurer. Il en existe une à l'Académie pour enfants de Dacca; d'autres villes ont seulement des petits départements pour enfants dans les bibliothèques publiques.

4. Cliniques

"Enfant en bonne santé: avenir assuré". Quatre-vingt pourcent des enfants du monde (1,22 milliard) vivent dans des pays en développement, où la plupart doivent faire face à la malnutrition, la maladie, le manque d'eau potable, d'hygiène et de soins médicaux. C'est un cercle vicieux où une génération en mauvaise santé en engendre une autre.

Au Bangladesh, la mortalité infantile est huit fois plus importante que dans les pays développés. Cela tient avant tout à ce que quatre enfants sur cinq attrapent des vers parasites et un sur dix de moins de cinq ans le tétanos; un grand nombre contractent chaque année la tuberculose et la rougeole. La cécité fait aussi de grands ravages (environ 17 000 cas par an).

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[4] Ibid.

La principale cause des maladies est l'eau polluée; plus de la moitié de celles attrapées par les enfants sont transmises par l'eau. Le manque d'hygiène et de soins primaires est également responsable de cette forte incidence parmi les enfants.

La malnutrition est l'un des principaux problèmes de santé dans les pays en développement comme le Bangladesh. Elle ne tient pas principalement aux particularités physiques du milieu, mais aux déficiences sociales, économiques et techniques de la région. L'enfant, au cours de son développement, a proportionnellement besoin de plus d'éléments nutritifs que l'adulte et pâtit davantage d'une alimentation déficiente.

Dans bien des pays en développement, les services médicaux disponibles dans les régions urbaines sont très insuffisants. Plus le pays est pauvre, moins il y a de lits d'hôpitaux en proportion des habitants et plus il y a de décès par suite de maladies non décelées et soignées.

Au Bangladesh, il y a trop peu d'installations médicales pour enfants. Il existe un seul hôpital pour enfants à Dacca, ouvert seulement depuis trois ans environ. Ailleurs, des services pour enfants sont rattachés à des hôpitaux de divisions et sous-divisions régionales. Il faut entreprendre une action à grande échelle pour créer davantage d'hôpitaux pour enfants et aussi ouvrir un certain nombre de cliniques pour enfants dans chaque localité. Il est également essentiel de fournir de l'eau potable.

L'Organisation mondiale de la santé a déjà créé un climat socio-politique d'urgence autour des besoins de l'enfant. Les bases d'une action systématique suivie en faveur de la santé et du bien-être de l'enfance, notamment dans le tiers-monde, ont été jetées. Ce qu'il faut, c'est une "démarche radicalement nouvelle" fondée sur une juste répartition des ressources sanitaires, une mobilisation des ressources nationales et internationales, une utilisation créative des médecines traditionnelles et la mise sur pied de techniques sanitaires adaptées aux besoins locaux.

5. Institutions pour enfants défavorisés

Le terme "défavorisés" vise ceux qui souffrent de graves problèmes économiques, sociaux, physiques et mentaux. On entend par là les enfants victimes du chômage, du sous-emploi, de la privation de terres, de la misère; de catastrophes naturelles (comme des cyclones et des inondations) et d'autres calamités (comme des guerres et des troubles sociaux de toutes sortes); de handicaps physiques, comme la cécité, la surdité et des infirmités; de handicaps sociaux, tels les orphelins et les mendiants; de handicaps mentaux.

Il n'existe pas de statistiques quantitatives complètes sur les enfants des diverses catégories "défavorisées". On dispose néanmoins de quelques-unes pour 1974. Ainsi, dans les enfants de neuf ans et moins, le nombre des complètement aveugles s'élevait à 533 620, celui des sourds à 64 500 et celui des infirmes à 49 990.

Bien qu'il existe certains orphelinats, établissements pour sourds et foyers pour vagabonds, le Bangladesh a très peu d'institutions pour enfants handicapés. Il faut affecter davantage de terrain à l'aménagement des installations voulues dans les régions urbaines.

PRIORITES, ORGANISATION ET GESTION

1. Contrôle démographique

Au Bangladesh, où la pauvreté est endémique et la démographie galopante, il faut mettre l'accent sur la croissance économique, la création d'emplois et le contrôle de la population.

L'essor démographique est une menace dans n'importe quel pays en développement. Au Bangladesh, il naît chaque année quelque 10 000 enfants. Cette croissance effrénée est une nouvelle calamité pour une enfance déjà sous-alimentée et mal lotie. Les plans dressés deviennent impossibles à réaliser car les ressources mobilisées ne suffisent pas aux besoins. Si cet essor n'est pas contrôlé, aucune tentative, nationale ou internationale, pour améliorer la condition de l'enfant n'aboutira. Le gouvernement en est parfaitement conscient et considère donc ce problème comme le plus grave de tous.

Le Bangladesh a un des taux de croissance démographique les plus élevés de la région. Avec un accroissement de 2,8% par an, la population pourrait doubler d'ici la fin du siècle. Le gouvernement toutefois s'est fixé un objectif ambitieux: ramener le taux de croissance à 2% dès 1980 et le stabiliser en moyenne à 1,5% jusqu'à l'an 2000. Même si le pays parvient à avoir une croissance démographique nulle, on prévoit que la population dépassera les 120 millions dès la fin du siècle. Avec cet essor démographique, si l'urbanisation se poursuit au même rythme, on prévoit pour l'an 2000 une population urbaine de l'ordre de 18 millions, dont 10 millions d'enfants.

On a pris récemment un certain nombre de mesures pour contrôler l'essor démographique. Des centres de planning familial ont été ouverts dans toutes les régions urbaines, et l'on s'efforce d'éduquer les gens pour qu'ils puissent tirer parti des diverses méthodes modernes de contrôle des naissances. Ces efforts ont été fructueux dans la mesure où le taux de natalité urbain a considérablement diminué ces derniers temps. Les citadins sont maintenant acquis au slogan "Two children are enough" (Deux enfants, c'est suffisant). Il va s'agir d'étendre cette action aux régions rurales aussi, si l'on veut protéger les intérêts des enfants urbains.

2. Planification

Le Bangladesh est un pays rural; l'accent a donc été mis en priorité sur l'agriculture et le développement rural, de sorte que les régions urbaines ne se taillent qu'une petite partie du budget; et les enfants urbains ne reçoivent pas l'attention voulue. D'un autre côté, et il faut le souligner, il existe déjà de fortes disparités entre citadins et ruraux, de

même qu'entre citadins riches et citadins pauvres. Il ne faut rien faire qui puisse creuser ce fossé et accentuer le déséquilibre au sein de la société. Accorder trop d'attention aux enfants urbains en leur offrant davantage de commodités risque de compliquer cet état de choses. La société urbaine subit la pression constante de la population rurale, et il faut bien se garder de créer un plus grand déséquilibre.

Au Bangladesh, la vie des enfants des catégories à faible revenu s'organise autour de traditions, de croyances et d'habitudes profondément ancrées, qui les insèrent dans le mode d'existence traditionnel. Dans le passé, ils tiraient de l'inspiration et d'énormes bienfaits de la nature. Leurs écoles étaient au grand air. Tout espace disponible était un terrain de jeux. Les moyens récréatifs étaient tous traditionnels, artisanaux. Les enfants n'avaient pas l'esprit embrouillé, tiraillé par des conflits et des contradictions. Aujourd'hui, dans les régions urbaines, ils sont confrontés à une foule de nouvelles idées déroutantes qui envahissent leur existence et les poussent à remettre en cause bien des choses qu'ils ont toujours tenues pour acquises. Ces idées sont totalement étrangères à leur acquis social et en complète contradiction avec la structure du tissu. De nos jours, l'enfant urbain au Bangladesh est dérouté parce qu'il ne peut ni vivre d'une façon nouvelle, moderne pour des raisons économiques, ni mener une existence traditionnelle en milieu citadin.

Avec le progrès technique et la perméation de la société urbaine par la culture étrangère, nos valeurs traditionnelles sont en train de disparaître petit à petit. Cependant, si nous concertons nos efforts pour ranimer les anciennes méthodes traditionnelles tout en offrant certaines commodités modernes, nous pouvons satisfaire tous nos besoins dans les limites de nos moyens.

Afin de faire profiter les enfants urbains des ressources restreintes disponibles dans les pays en développement, une planification coordonnée s'impose. La plupart des pays tiers-mondaux n'ont pas encore pris conscience qu'il faut protéger les intérêts de l'enfant. Si la planification n'est pas considérée comme une partie intégrante de l'administration et une responsabilité du gouvernement, il risque d'être difficile de veiller aux besoins de l'enfant quand se planifie l'usage du terrain.

L'utilisation de la superficie urbaine peut être influencée par trois biais: la réglementation, la taxation et l'achat de terrains par l'Etat. Réglementer l'usage du terrain n'a rien de bien nouveau; des restrictions étaient déjà imposées dans les villes de Babylonie. Cependant, la réglementation ne s'est pas avérée la solution clé au problème de l'amélioration du milieu urbain; dans les pays en développement, cette ligne de conduite est quasiment un échec total car les gouvernements sont souvent incapables de faire appliquer les restrictions, simplement parce qu'ils n'ont pas la machine voulue.

La taxation peut être un moyen puissant et souple. Elle est par exemple utile pour empêcher la spéculation foncière. Mais la plupart des pays du tiers-monde n'imposent pas d'impôt foncier substantiel afin de ne pas écraser les propriétaires.

Déçus par ce qui pouvait s'accomplir au travers de la réglementation ou de la taxation, la majorité des pays ont décidé d'intervenir directement. L'achat de terrains par l'Etat peut contribuer à atténuer certains des problèmes engendrés par la propriété privée. Cependant, même si le terrain est propriété de l'Etat, son utilisation est conditionnée par les pressions du marché et de l'opinion publique.

Il importe de souligner par ailleurs que toute la responsabilité ne doit pas nécessairement être supportée par le gouvernement. Les organismes bénévoles qui s'occupent d'aménagements pour enfants peuvent en effet en assumer une très grande part.

3. Action entreprise par le Bangladesh

Le pays doit relever un énorme défi, compte tenu de sa situation socio-économique. Heureusement, le gouvernement actuel se rend compte qu'à moins de progrès rapides et concrets dans les domaines économique et social, l'avenir restera précaire et morne pour l'enfance et la nation tout entière.

Le Bangladesh a pris plusieurs mesures nouvelles pour mettre en route un plan de développement. Un plan biennal provisoire a été arrêté, et le deuxième plan quinquennal devrait être inauguré en juillet 1980. Un plan de 20 ans est en cours d'élaboration; il vise à remédier à la pénurie alimentaire, à contrôler l'essor démographique, et à juguler et éliminer le chômage. Durant l'Année internationale de l'enfant, le gouvernement a également institué un conseil national devant s'occuper des problèmes de santé, de nutrition et d'éducation de l'enfance.

Nul doute que la tâche pour les années à venir est colossale et qu'elle exige une sensibilisation et une concertation nationales. Le Bangladesh est un pays pauvre, mais résolu, avec l'acquis unique d'une guerre de libération encore récente. Il manque peut-être de moyens, mais a la chance d'avoir un gouvernement décidé et un grand réservoir de main-d'oeuvre bon marché.

Je fais appel à vous pour aider à combattre ce gigantesque problème. J'ai dit au début que l'enfance est internationale: les gens du monde entier ont une responsabilité précise envers elle.

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L'ENFANT ET LE MILIEU: UN PROGRAMME D'ACTION POUR DEMAIN

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Toute planification doit nécessairement s'occuper de l'avenir. Il s'ensuit logiquement que la planification qui tente de façonner le futur doit se soucier particulièrement de ceux qui vont vivre essentiellement dans ce temps-là. Même si la planification concerne ou devrait concerner tous les gens, mettre l'accent sur l'enfance et la jeunesse ne veut pas nécessairement dire être exagérément restrictif.

INFLUENCES CULTURELLES ET SOCIALES

Dans le passé, l'échec des efforts de développement de sociétés sous-développées a été expliqué par le manque de ressources financières, l'absence d'une volonté politique ou l'insuffisance de moyens techniques. Mais le constat traditionnel masque le fait qu'il part d'une certaine conception du développement, et d'un modèle liés à l'expérience du monde occidental (Marcos, 1976). La question épineuse devient de savoir ce que devrait viser l'urbanisme. Les aménageurs devraient-ils offrir aux gens ce qu'ils veulent, même si ce n'est pas nécessairement bon pour eux, ou bien leur imposer leurs propres préférences?

Tout le monde admet que la culture influence le mode de comportement d'un individu. Il faut citer à titre d'exemple, comme l'ont relevé les sociologues, la facilité avec laquelle le Philippin accepte le surpeuplement des logements: il semble que sa tolérance à la concentration humaine soit très élevée. Cette attitude face à l'espace a été rattachée à ce que l'on a appelé une "culture de l'horreur du vide" ou le malaise devant les espaces vides. Cela se voit dans la peinture philippine traditionnelle, de même que dans notre décor rococo moderne (style jeepney). Les décorateurs intérieurs en parlent et les constructeurs soulignent la préférence des propriétaires pour une maison qui occupe pratiquement tout le terrain sur lequel elle est bâtie (Hollnsteiner, 1969).

On a noté que l'enfant philippin n'a pas besoin d'énormément d'espace. La maison typique comporte d'habitude une pièce qui sert de séjour le jour et de chambre la nuit. Toute la famille dort généralement sous une moustiquaire et, le matin, on roule la natte communautaire sur laquelle elle a dormi pour utiliser la place à d'autres fins. Les maisons des plus riches peuvent avoir deux ou trois chambres, mais il n'est pas rare que les enfants de ces familles préfèrent dormir avec les parents dans la chambre principale - une habitude facilement admise et considérée comme normale. Si les architectes qui ont conçu ces grandes habitations en avaient mieux tenu compte, l'espace affecté à ces chambres inoccupées aurait pu être utilisé d'une manière plus judicieuse.

Cet état de choses a des côtés très positifs pour l'enfant urbain. La proximité physique et sociale des gens fait, par exemple, qu'il doit apprendre très tôt à respecter le tempérament d'autrui et à éviter pardessus tout les frictions. L'enfant, des études le révèlent, assimile l'importance accordée par la culture philippine aux relations entre individus. Notre société encourage l'expérience de la vie de groupe et de quartier comme un moyen de socialiser l'enfant. Cette interaction étroite donne à celui-ci un sentiment d'appartenance et de sécurité; elle satisfait le besoin d'un mode de vie adapté aux exigences physiques du milieu, et explique peut-être le taux relativement bas de dépressions et de névroses que nous connaissons par rapport à nos homologues occidentaux.

LA VOIX DE L'ENFANT

Les enfants ne votent pas. Ils ne constituent pas une clientèle politique. Leurs problèmes ne viennent généralement pas en bonne place dans les priorités nationales et, quand ils y figurent, ils représentent de simples "considérations sociales annexes" au lieu d'entrer dans le plan de développement socio-économique. Pourtant, en tant que ressources humaines, enfance et jeunesse sont essentielles au développement. Elles forment, avec le potentiel de production qu'elles recèlent, ce que l'on pourrait appeler un "investissement humain"; et à ce titre, elles ne sauraient être reléguées au rang de simples consommateurs dans l'économique de la planification.

Une façon d'aborder le problème de la planification au profit de l'enfance et de la jeunesse est de se demander si les besoins de l'enfant devraient être considérés comme un secteur de planification à part ou bien si les divers aspects de la planification qui concernent l'enfant devraient être traités comme des secteurs différents. En pratique, il serait quasiment impossible de mettre l'enfance à part et de concevoir un programme sectoriel pour son développement (Singer, 1966). Quand la planification au profit de l'enfance et de la jeunesse est conçue comme une partie intégrante du plan de développement national, leurs exigences ne constituent pas un nouveau secteur de planification et d'administration. L'enfant ou le jeune est vu au contraire dans son intégralité, comme le centre de bien des programmes fonctionnels, par exemple: éducation, services de santé, habillement, logement, emploi, bien-être et autres services sociaux, activités multinationales (Reubens, 1967).

Le 10 décembre 1974, à l'occasion de la Journée des droits de l'homme, notre président, son Excellence Ferdinand E. Marcos, a publié un décret instituant un Code du bien-être de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, ayant maintenant force de loi aux Philippines. Le nouveau code voit l'enfant comme un être global et définit les droits fondamentaux attachés à chaque aspect de sa personne; premier principe énoncé: "L'enfance est l'une des principales richesses de la nation. Il faut donc tout faire pour promouvoir son bien-être et ses chances de mener une existence utile et heureuse."

Deux ans plus tard, le 10 décembre 1976, le président a fait nationalement de la période 1977 à 1987 la Décennie de l'enfant philippin.

Les activités connexes, coordonnées par le Conseil du bien-être de l'enfance, ont débouché sur le lancement d'un plan national d'action, large et intégré, pour promouvoir l'épanouissement des enfants et des jeunes au cours de la décennie. Ce plan décennal cherche avant tout à transformer la gamme des services et des appuis nécessaires à l'épanouissement de l'enfant; il consiste principalement à instaurer un système intégré de services, combinant anciens et nouveaux.

On n'a cessé de répéter que les plus démunis dans la vie doivent être les plus protégés par la loi. Cela vaut pour les enfants. De plus, pour avoir une signification, les droits juridiques doivent obligatoirement se traduire par des services pratiques. Les Philippines préconisent depuis longtemps une démarche globale à l'égard de l'enfance. Nous sommes ainsi en train de mettre au point un programme intégré d'assistance sociale, complété par un programme de promotion culturelle.

En bâtissant le milieu où nos enfants vont vivre et jouer jour après jour, nous devons avoir pour but d'en faire des membres autonomes et responsables de la société, aptes à se faire eux-mêmes. De la qualité de leur cadre de vie va dépendre la valeur de leurs accomplissements.

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DE, PAR ET POUR L'ENFANT:
UNE ORGANISATION CYBERNETIQUE POUR L'AMENAGEMENT URBAIN

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UN MODELE VISANT LA PARTICIPATION DE TOUS

Nous voulons faire ici un exposé de synthèse autour d'un modèle qui régit l'élaboration de lignes de conduite à bien des paliers de décision de la société, et vaut aussi bien pour une famille, un complexe d'habitations multifamiliales, un quartier, un ensemble de quartiers, une communauté, une ville, une région ou un état. Notre espoir est que ce modèle aide les adultes actuellement chargés de l'aménagement du milieu de l'enfant, et encourage la participation étroite et efficace d'autres grandes personnes, parents et gardiens, ainsi que de l'enfance proprement dite.

Nous voulons que tous - enfants et parents, profanes et universitaires - participent pleinement à l'aménagement urbain, de façon à ce qu'il réponde aux besoins en tous genres des gens et pas seulement à ceux d'un groupe d'usagers du milieu ou d'une poignée d'entre eux. Pour que l'on puisse oeuvrer de concert à la réalisation d'objectifs communs, nous proposons donc un modèle qui assure une organisation de la participation et une coplanification optimales, une affectation et une exploitation optimales des ressources.

Il est relativement facile de trouver à redire aux institutions et mécanismes déjà en place censés être au service de l'enfant. Peut-être que si nous comprenons pourquoi ils ne répondent pas aux attentes, nous parviendrons à les remplacer par des systèmes qui produisent les résultats escomptés. A notre sens, les mécanismes actuels comme les bureaucraties gouvernementales procèdent de besoins et de soucis appartenant au passé. Même s'ils ont pu convenir à une époque et eu souvent beaucoup à apporter, ils ne sont plus adaptés.

La façon de percevoir ces systèmes vient en outre compliquer le problème. Lorsque nous les concevons, nous bâtissons des modèles où nous, les modélistes, faisons partie intégrante des systèmes échafaudés. Si notre perception est erronée, la représentation le devient également. Le danger est alors, premièrement, que les modèles n'expliquent plus le comportement et, deuxièmement, que les modélistes s'imaginent le contraire (Beer, 1975).

Quant à nous, nous proposons comme alternative la mise sur pied d'un modèle d'organisation et de gestion couvrant des problèmes ou systèmes sociaux complexes. A cette fin, nous devons toucher au fondement théorique et pratique de la théorie et de la cybernétique des systèmes généraux.

THEORIE ET CYBERNETIQUE DES SYSTEMES GENERAUX

Les préceptes de la théorie et de la cybernétique des systèmes généraux assurent un cadre de connaissance qui permet de comprendre, d'expliquer et de gérer des systèmes complexes dans la mesure où ils autorisent une étude et une synthèse "systématiques", contrairement à la démarche analytique plus traditionnelle et mécaniste qui consiste à fragmenter et simplifier problèmes ou questions pour pouvoir les étudier. Comme nous le savons, cette dernière s'est avérée étriquée et insatisfaisante: on s'est attaqué de manière décousue à divers fléaux sociaux, mais le malaise social général s'est aggravé. La théorie des systèmes nous enseigne certains grands principes en la matière, dont des lignes directrices pour le développement et la gestion de systèmes vivants, durables en tant qu'organisations. Ces principes valent à tous les niveaux de systèmes, qu'il s'agisse de la cellule, de l'organe, de l'être humain, du groupe, de l'organisation, de la communauté, de la ville, de l'état, de la nation, ou de tout ensemble d'états ou de nations. La théorie des systèmes offre en outre un moyen d'intégrer convenablement dans un modèle tous les aspects d'un système compliqué, y compris ses interactions avec le milieu. Les problèmes abordés "systématiquement" sont donc traités de manière holistique. La démarche "systématique", de plus, permet de comprendre les divers niveaux de systèmes (super-système, système, sous-système, sous-sous-système, etc.). Dans ces conditions, après avoir identifié les divers paliers de décision, de planification ou de gestion que nous risquons de rencontrer, nous pourrons y appliquer cet enseignement.

Qu'est-ce que la théorie des systèmes nous amène à proposer comme organisation pour l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant? Cette dernière aura les caractéristiques communes aux grands systèmes viables. Nous voulons que le système survive. Pour cela, il doit s'auto-organiser et s'auto-réguler; il doit également s'adapter aux changements tant endogènes qu'exogènes. Ainsi donc, pour être viable, notre système cybernétique doit être capable d'apprentissage. Cet apprentissage, suivant les principes de l'organisation cybernétique, peut s'analyser à la lumière des multiples circuits de rétroaction. En dernier lieu, nous devons gérer convenablement le système.

RECOMMANDATIONS ORGANISATIONNELLES: LE SYSTEME DE L'ENFANT

Comment pouvons-nous être certains que l'organisation que nous proposons ne connaîtra pas le même sort que les systèmes traditionnels? Nous avons mis au point une autre structure organisationnelle qui satisfait les critères des systèmes viables. Celle que nous proposons, nous l'appelons le système de l'enfant. Elle repose sur la logique fonctionnelle à cinq paliers propre aux ensembles neurologiques comme le cerveau humain et

le système nerveux - un système de contrôle des plus efficaces (illustration 1; Beer, 1972). Le modèle est précieux en ce sens qu'il fait ressortir comment une organisation pourrait fonctionner (et non fonctionne vraiment ou soi-disant), de sorte qu'on peut la rendre plus efficace. L'illustration 2 schématise le modèle organisationnel.

Convenant pour n'importe quelle organisation apte à fonctionner, ce modèle détaille les niveaux de contrôle que l'on peut trouver dans tous les systèmes viables. Ci-dessous, nous allons passer brièvement en revue les cinq paliers de contrôle, ainsi que leurs interactions, en donnant une idée de leurs applications tout d'abord aux services urbains, ensuite à l'échelon national. Nous les avons retenus parce qu'ils semblent pouvoir illustrer de manière utile des applications possibles. D'autres paliers et ensembles de paliers méritent également d'être approfondis et simulés.

Le Palier 1 se compose de divisions. Elles exercent chacune le contrôle sur les activités, les événements et les processus locaux. Ce sont des unités opérationnelles relativement autonomes, qui agissent indépendamment dans leurs sphères locales. Elles doivent cependant oeuvrer au sein des mécanismes de coordination du Palier 2 et se plier au contrôle autonome du Palier 3. (Il s'agit d'un contrôle qui "prend pour acquis un système essentiellement opérationnel et un ensemble fondamental d'instructions, et s'attache alors à équilibrer ce qui se fait"; Beer, 1972.) Chaque division possède des directeurs divisionnaires chargés de l'établissement de programmes, de la planification en fonction de certains objectifs et de la planification normative. Les fonctions de contrôle au Palier 1 sont les suivantes:

1. arrêter les projets initiaux;
2. réviser constamment les projets coordonnés au Palier 2;
3. identifier immédiatement la situation.

Les applications aux services urbains pourraient consister à avoir comme divisions des organisations de quartiers chargées à la fois de cerner les besoins et d'assurer les services au plan local. Des enfants en feraient partie; suivant les services assurés, ils seraient plus ou moins associés aux décisions.

Le Palier 2 se compose des centres de régulation interdivisionnaire. Ceux-ci assurent les communications nécessaires à la coordination des activités entre divisions. Les centres de régulation sont des groupes ad hoc et officiels composés de directeurs divisionnaires et de conseillers de la Direction générale des opérations (Palier 3). Ils visent à assurer la collaboration des divisions et la coordination de leurs activités, et donc le fonctionnement harmonieux de toute l'organisation. Dans notre esprit, un centre typique est formé d'un groupe non structuré de directeurs divisionnaires qui, conformément à leurs attributions, produisent des données sur les réalisations de leurs divisions, comparent les activités respectives et peuvent tenter de les coordonner par le biais d'arrangements officiels, contractuels.

ILLUSTRATION 1

LOGIQUE A 5 PALIERS DU SYSTEME NERVEUX HUMAIN

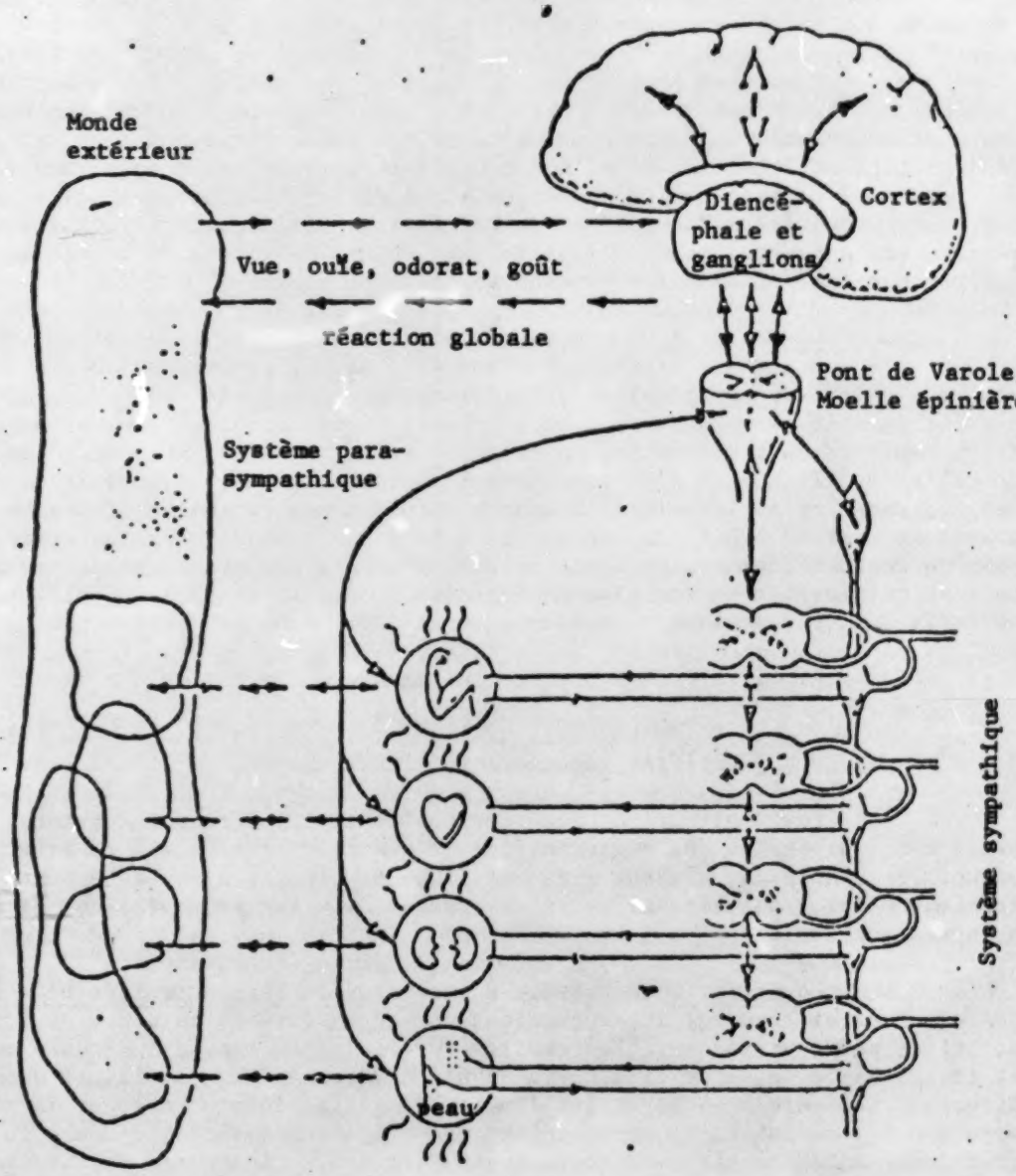
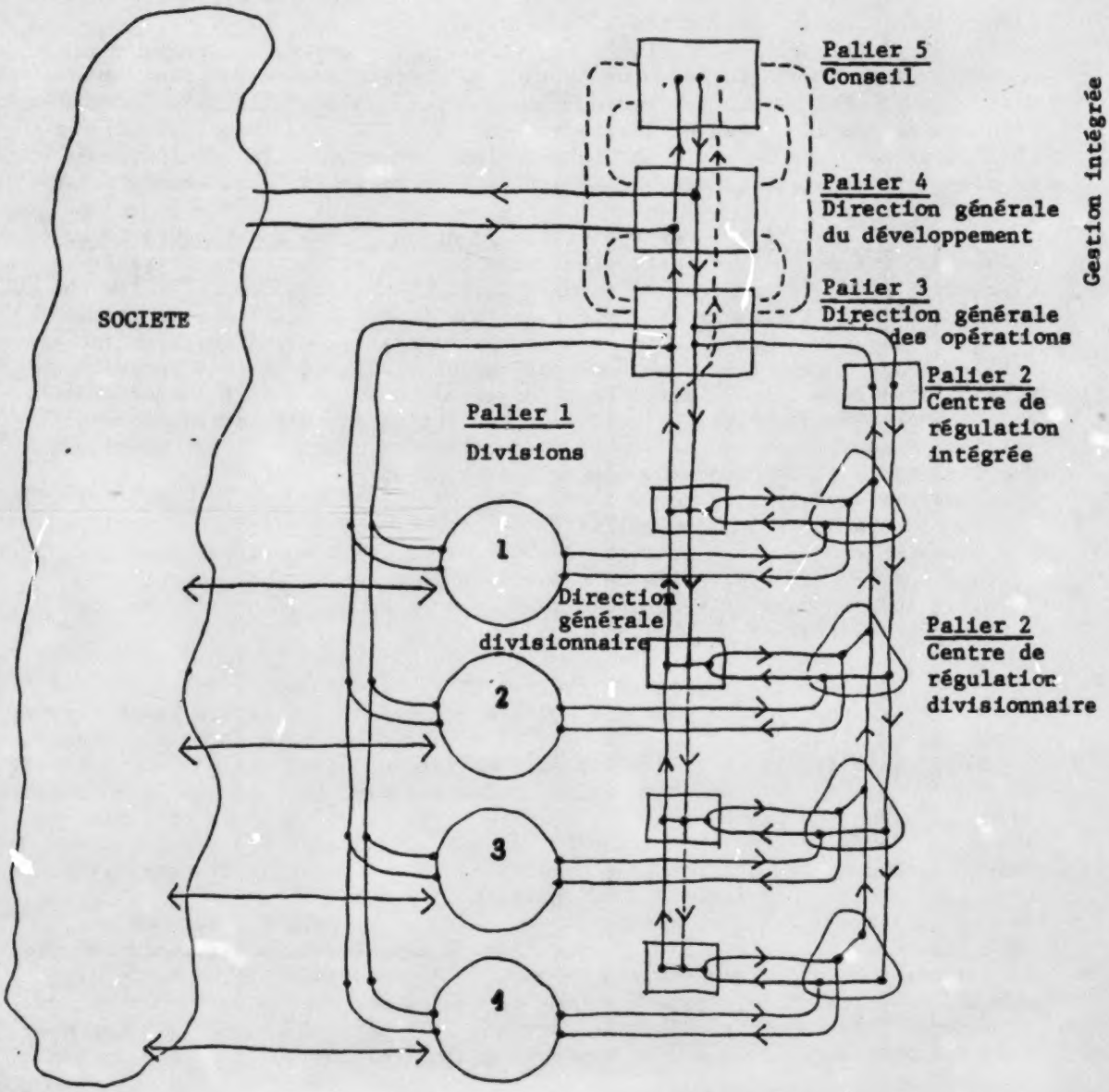


ILLUSTRATION 2

Fonction analogique de contrôle



Un des centres du Palier 2 - le Centre de régulation intégrée - est un comité officiel composé de directeurs divisionnaires et généralement pourvu d'un président. Il évalue les réalisations des divisions à la lumière des objectifs fixés; de plus, il tranche officiellement les litiges, en consultant la Direction générale des opérations au Palier 3, en invoquant la hiérarchie devant le Conseil au Palier 5, ou en utilisant les deux recours à la fois.

Dans ce modèle appliqué au milieu urbain, les directeurs divisionnaires seraient des membres élus ou délégués par les divisions, y compris les enfants. Ils collaboreraient pour vérifier que tous les services communautaires sont bien assurés, pour éviter les chevauchements inutiles, pour décider de l'affectation des ressources au niveau du quartier, etc. Ce second palier est le niveau de l'interaction des divisions. Les activités s'exécuteraient par le biais des interactions courantes entre divisions de quartier et des politiques urbaines officielles de la ville en cause.

Au Palier 3, on trouve la Direction générale des opérations. C'est le point de jonction entre les opérations locales et les activités intégrées ou pour l'ensemble de l'organisation. Le Palier 3 contrôle les communications vers l'aval et filtre celles vers l'amont. Il supervise toutes les activités aux niveaux inférieurs pour s'assurer qu'elles se déroulent et interagissent bien, et ne compromettent pas la viabilité de tout le système. Dans un même temps, le Palier 3 sert de plaque-tournante: il transmet plus haut les problèmes méritant l'attention des instances supérieures, tout en veillant à ne pas importuner les décisionnaires en amont avec des questions peu importantes. La Direction générale des opérations contrôle de manière autonome les activités de toute l'organisation. Elle assure la stabilité interne du système et en optimalise le fonctionnement. Elle a une meilleure vue d'ensemble de toute l'activité des divisions grâce aux renseignements fournis par le Palier 4. Elle peut porter à l'attention du Palier 5 tout problème opérationnel grave dont le règlement exige une compétence et une information spéciales.

Au Palier 3, l'activité a pour échelle toute la ville. (Nous sommes partis du principe qu'une structure organisationnelle qui passe directement du quartier au niveau urbain était souhaitable. Une autre solution possible est d'ajouter des échelons intermédiaires, comme des circonscriptions. Si l'on adoptait cette solution ou une autre formule, les paliers 3, 4 et 5 seraient situés au prochain niveau supérieur qui convient.) La Direction générale des opérations se compose de délégués divisionnaires (dont les enfants) possédant les attributions propres au Palier 3. Elle dispose également d'un groupe consultatif. Ces conseillers peuvent être des spécialistes fonctionnels, c'est-à-dire des personnes (adultes et enfants) qui ont des services ou des renseignements particuliers à apporter aux divisions; il pourrait s'agir par exemple d'experts en matière de besoins de logement, de garderies, de terrains de jeux, de zonage et autres règlements particuliers, de financement, de comptabilité ou de gestion. Il vaudrait peut-être mieux que certains des conseillers soient membres de la Direction générale des opérations.

Le Palier 4 est constitué par la Direction générale du développement. C'est "l'appareil sensoriel" de toute l'organisation. C'est le dernier stade où se prépare l'information sur le fonctionnement interne et le milieu du système. La Direction générale du développement s'occupe des questions de politique et de planification pour toute l'organisation; elle détermine au travers de modèles métasystématiques les futures tournures possibles du système, tente de prédire et d'organiser son avenir, et met au point d'autres modèles d'organisation possibles à l'intention du Conseil (Palier 5). Elle est également en liaison directe avec le milieu; de cette façon, elle permet à la Direction générale des opérations et au Conseil de mieux apprécier le cadre d'activité et peut porter à l'attention du Palier 5 les problèmes de politique ou autres, graves, que pose le milieu et qui risquent d'influer sur l'avenir de toute l'organisation. Le Palier 4, à l'échelon urbain, s'occupe essentiellement du monde extérieur et de l'avenir du système.

Au Palier 5, on a le Conseil. C'est le niveau des décisions intégrées ou pour tout le système. Il prend les principales décisions politiques touchant l'avenir de l'organisation. Il se charge principalement de déterminer la meilleure organisation possible pour l'avenir, au vu des modèles soumis par la Direction générale du développement. Il est en mesure de saisir l'ensemble du fonctionnement du système, et l'évalue à la lumière des politiques et des projets existants et futurs.

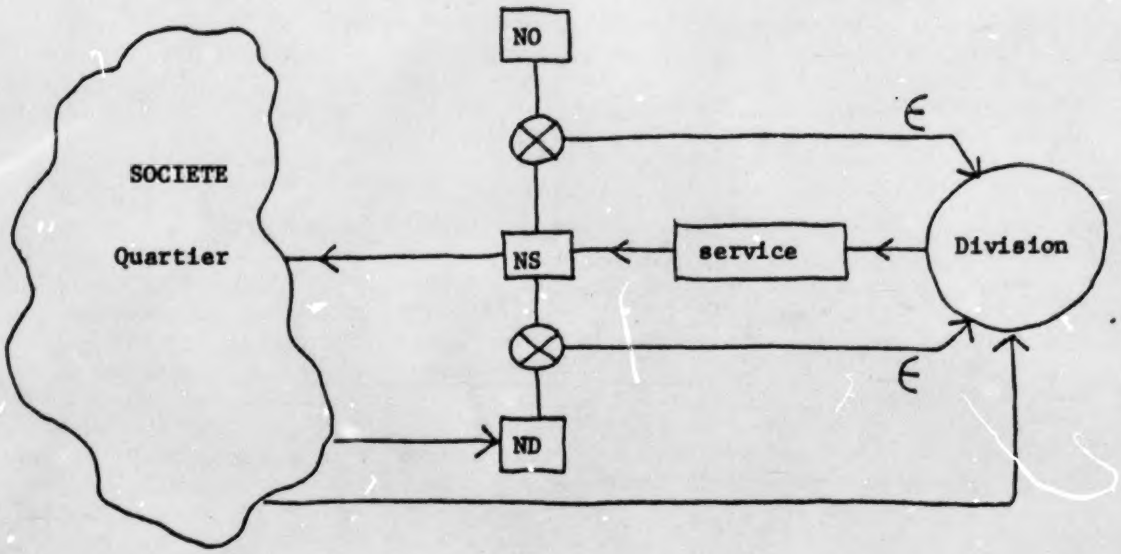
Si on applique ce schéma à un individu qui fait fonctionner une machine, on trouve au Palier 2 une fonction organique qui s'occupe de coordonner les organes individuels. Au Palier 3, on a les mécanismes sympathiques et parasympathiques, qui sont des organes fonctionnant de concert. Aux Paliers 4 et 5, on obtient d'autres fonctions organiques formant des sous-systèmes et des composantes du système à l'échelon de l'organisme. Ce schéma retrace l'intégration des fonctions organiques en un système au niveau de l'organisme (Duncan, 1977).

Quand on considère à proprement parler les relations entre ces divers paliers, on obtient le schéma suivant: au niveau de la gestion intégrée ou à l'échelon urbain, nous avons la direction générale; elle est chargée de faire le lien entre la réalité opérationnelle/interne et les conditions externes/futures, afin que le Conseil puisse prendre des décisions politiques éclairées et réalisables. Nous aimerions à ce stade faire ressortir et illustrer sous forme de modèle les deux principales relations que ce système de l'enfant urbain risque d'avoir avec son milieu.

Comme nous l'avons dit, il existe une relation immédiate entre les divisions de quartier et le quartier (illustration 3). La division assure un ensemble de services sociaux en fonction des besoins perçus, du niveau urbain, des objectifs du système et des normes; celles-ci s'appellent les normes officielles (N.O., illustration 3). Ce service de quartier constitue une norme de service (N.S.) - pouvant être supérieure à la N.O. - que les résidents vont juger d'après leurs normes désirées (N.D.). On peut alors envisager un moyen de comparaison (⊛) pour confronter en permanence N.S. et N.D. et envoyer aux divisions un signal de rajustement (ξ) visant à faire modifier le service et à combler les écarts entre normes. Ce moyen de

ILLUSTRATION 3

Division - Relations avec le milieu



comparaison au premier degré peut être un résident qui se plaint à une "réunion municipale" régulière; il peut s'agir de gens du voisinage, comme un directeur de garderie, associés au service fourni; ou bien, une formule mixte convenable peut être adoptée officiellement ou non.

Nous avons généralement tendance à oublier, toutefois, que la société est une organisation dynamique, en constante évolution. Ainsi, au niveau du quartier, les services désirés sont continuellement comparés avec les services normatifs de maintenant, à l'époque t, et la situation antérieure à l'époque t-1 (illustration 4). Les services désirés vont donc changer; cette information sera enregistrée par les divisions. Dans un même temps cette société, ou ce quartier, exerce également une certaine influence sur son corps dirigeant (la mairie, par exemple) et a donc prise sur les responsables des services au niveau municipal (l'équivalent urbain du Conseil) ou les organismes connexes, comme ceux chargés de réglementer l'usage des superficies urbaines.

Au niveau national (et nous pouvons avoir autant de niveaux que nous le jugeons nécessaire à la viabilité de l'organisation), notre système national de l'enfant peut former le cadre du système de l'enfant urbain. Il peut se composer de divisions qui représentent des états ou des provinces et traitent directement avec leur clientèle. La relation d'une division avec sa clientèle est semblable à celle (déjà mentionnée) entre les divisions de quartier et le quartier. Les centres de régulation au Palier 2 jouent le même rôle, de la manière déjà décrite. La Direction générale des opérations est un bureau national ou un ministère de l'enfance qui s'occupe du détail des services urbains. Il regroupe ou a pour associés tous les autres organismes nationaux chargés des aménagements pour enfants, par exemple des normes en matière de logement et de garderie. Ces organismes peuvent jouer un rôle précis en matière de recherche, d'élaboration de normes et d'affectation de ressources; ils peuvent être en même temps associés avec d'autres organisations nationales remplissant des fonctions différentes.

La Direction générale du développement conserve ses anciennes attributions et s'occupe des futures orientations dictées par le milieu. Le Conseil arrête les politiques nationales.

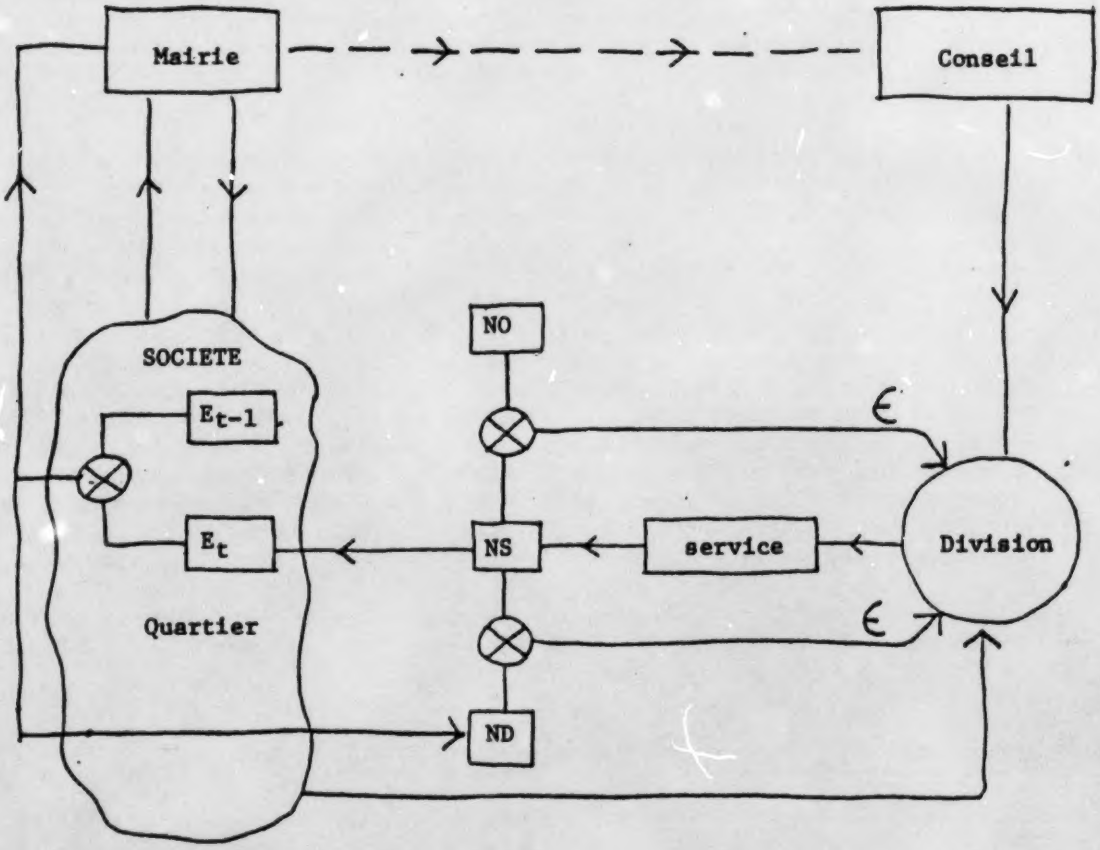
LE SYSTEME DE L'ENFANT DANS LA PRATIQUE

Voyons brièvement ce qu'implique le modèle d'organisation et de gestion que nous proposons pour l'aménagement du cadre de vie de l'enfant dans le contexte urbain.

Il y a tout d'abord le problème d'un milieu convenable. Etant donné que le modèle prévoit une évaluation continuelle des services par l'usager, comme on l'a vu dans les circuits de rétroaction directe entre les divisions du Palier 1 et leurs clientèles de quartier, le milieu convenable peut être déterminé à la fois par cette clientèle et par une information davantage fondée sur la recherche. De cette façon, on assure un apport direct au niveau de la division; et en outre, les modifications de normes et les services que l'usager risque d'exiger de la division vont fournir des renseignements permettant d'améliorer continuellement les normes et services officiels à l'échelon municipal et national.

ILLUSTRATION 4

Organisation - Relations avec le milieu



Deuxièmement, le modèle d'organisation que nous avons appelé le système de l'enfant est répétitif, c'est-à-dire qu'on peut l'appliquer à divers paliers de contribution ou de décision. Nous avons ainsi choisi le quartier comme premier palier dans un cas, et l'état ou la province dans l'autre exemple, national. Ces paliers semblent logiques, mais dans certains cas, une unité plus petite (comme une famille ou un pâté de maisons) pourrait mieux convenir comme division au premier palier; à l'autre extrême, si nous imaginons le système de l'enfant comme une organisation internationale, les nations deviennent alors les divisions. De plus, nous avons vu dans le cadre du système de l'enfant un autre système à un palier de complexité et de décision plus élevé.

Troisièmement, il nous faut mettre l'accent sur la participation. Comme nous l'avons indiqué, toutes les personnes incluses dans un système de l'enfant - spécialistes, gardiens et enfants - participent activement à l'organisation en vue d'atteindre un objectif commun.

Nous pensons qu'il s'agit d'un modèle d'organisation conceptuel et opérationnel qui assure efficacement une participation à des multiples paliers. Il nous reste maintenant à le mettre en pratique.

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LES IMPLICATIONS POLITIQUES DE LA PARTICIPATION DE L'ENFANT: VERS UNE SOCIETE DE PARTICIPATION

par Simon Nicholson et Raymond Lorenzo

Gruppo Futuro
(participation communautaire de l'enfant à l'avenir)
The Open University Oxford Research Unit, Oxford et Naples

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Après l'assassinat d'Aldo Moro, le président italien, bien des professeurs de Naples ont "suggéré" à leurs élèves de faire un poème ou un dessin sur le thème "la nature tragique de sa mort", "sa grande carrière" ou "la violence des Brigades rouges". Dans le Gruppo Futuro, on n'a rien suggéré de ce genre. Néanmoins, un enfant de neuf ans a décidé d'enregistrer une ballade de sa composition, disant: "... ils ont tué Aldo Moro, nous ne saurons jamais la vérité. Ils ont tué Aldo Moro ... et nous sommes à l'école et ne savons vraiment rien."

Le directeur et professeur d'une école napolitaine a tenté d'expliquer aux élèves du Gruppo Futuro pourquoi plusieurs de leurs collages "futuristes" (réalisés sur des photos de leur communauté) devraient être censurés: "Certaines forces réactionnaires vont essayer d'exploiter la présence de plusieurs nus dans les collages comme le signe du caractère pornographique des nouvelles attitudes envers l'école au sein, par exemple, du Gruppo Futuro. Vous, vous comprenez, mais peut-être pas vos parents". Un des enfants a dit: "Nous leur expliquerons ... tout est là."

Des élèves de 9 à 11 ans associés au projet Gruppo Futuro devaient participer à leur école à une réunion communautaire sur "les espaces verts". Ils préparèrent un court diaporama sur le jeu et les aires de jeux, ainsi qu'une série de questions à l'intention des hommes politiques censés y assister. La réunion devait commencer à 17h30, mais à 18h30 les "politiciens" n'étaient toujours pas là. Et tandis que les adultes attendaient passivement les "principaux orateurs", les enfants se plaignirent du retard auprès du directeur (qui attendait la limousine des officiels devant l'école) et enregistrèrent ses réactions sur cassette. La réunion commença aussitôt après (sans les bureaucrates), avec la reproduction en public de l'enregistrement contenant les idées et critiques des enfants.

GRUPPO FUTURO

Ces anecdotes illustrent quelques-uns des nombreux incidents survenus lorsque le groupement Projettazione del futuro de parte dei bambini ou Children's Participation in Futures (participation communautaire de

l'enfant à l'avenir), appelé maintenant le Gruppo Futuro et ayant pour affiliés des écoles de Glasgow et de Toronto, s'est réuni à Naples et Oxford au cours de 1978-1979. Nous voulions tenter d'instituer un mécanisme (processus) par lequel les enfants pourraient expérimenter avec le plus de moyens de communication possible pour formuler, avancer, questionner et façonner d'autres solutions d'avenir, en étant le moins influencés possible par des grandes personnes (notamment spécialisées et enseignantes). Le projet fait intervenir deux écoles publiques à Naples. L'une se trouve dans le quartier ouvrier et moyen-bourgeois de la colline de Vomero, l'autre dans le nouvel arrondissement périphérique de Rione Traiano. Ces écoles sont intégrées dans la mesure où les élèves dits handicapés participent à la vie scolaire de tous les jours. En revanche, pour Oxford, il s'agit d'une école élémentaire publique située dans un quartier mixte du point de vue racial, de la langue principale et du niveau de revenu, et d'une école d'un niveau pédagogique inférieur à la normale, où les enfants viennent principalement d'un milieu ouvrier. Presque tous leurs élèves ont l'anglais pour langue principale, mais sont socialement et géographiquement séparés des autres enfants.

A partir du moment où le projet a pris de l'essor, notre rôle est devenu d'instiller l'idée qu'un changement et un avenir différent sont possibles. Nous avons constaté que la plupart des enfants le savaient déjà, mais que la scolarité empêchait de penser à bien des types de changements, particulièrement d'une nature non scientifique ou technologique. Non contents de devenir des animateurs, nous sommes intervenus au niveau de l'école. Cette intervention a consisté à fournir aux élèves des moyens de communications, dont du matériel de dessin, de diaporama et d'enregistrement audiovisuel sur cassettes, une photocopieuse et les commodités pour imprimer, relier et expédier leurs propres ouvrages sur l'avenir (un équipement moins coûteux que des bâtiments avec des administrateurs et du personnel). Elle a également consisté à instaurer un cadre où le changement est acceptable: le plus souvent, les changements envisagés par les enfants étaient liés à la perception de la communauté.

Il est difficile de décrire notre processus d'intervention: il ne remplace pas des experts en faisant de nous des "experts de remplacement"; <u>les enfants sont les experts</u>. Ceci est le processus inverse de ce que l'on appelle généralement la scolarité et comporte des implications pour le fondement politique de la future société. On a avancé que les docteurs causent la maladie, les avocats le crime, les architectes les ghettos, les technologues la mort et les professeurs l'ignorance. Nous avons découvert qu'il est possible d'avancer avec optimisme que les enfants peuvent se plaire à collaborer avec des adultes de tous âges (et pas seulement des "experts adultes") à la création d'un monde meilleur - des utopies plus proches que l'on peut maintenant envisager - et que le processus d'intervention consiste simplement à approcher les efforts humains avec le futur <u>et</u> le passé présents à l'esprit. C'est une entreprise à laquelle tout le monde peut participer.

Vu la nature du projet sur l'avenir, les élèves ont joui d'une grande autonomie par rapport à celle généralement accordée par les écoles. Ils ont eu ainsi davantage le loisir de poser des questions, de faire des recherches, d'expérimenter, de jouer et de mélanger des activités physiques

et intellectuelles jusque-là séparées. Les enfants ont modifié notre façon de penser: ils ont institué leurs propres moyens d'expression (mots et images), normes et valeurs.

CLIMAT POLITIQUE

Le Gruppo Futuro a un idéal politique: il se veut collectif, libertaire et participationniste. Nous oeuvrons dans des conditions politiques qui cadrent à certains moments avec nos aspirations et pas à d'autres.

Les écoles contrôlent généralement les idées exprimées de trois manières: premièrement, en réglementant le genre d'idées pouvant être exprimées, par le biais d'un programme d'études et d'une communication unilatérale, de "professeur" à élève; deuxièmement, en restreignant la façon dont ces idées peuvent l'être, par le truchement d'un système de notes et d'une hiérarchisation des moyens d'expression (par exemple, en faisant passer les mots et les chiffres avant les images); et troisièmement, en déterminant à qui les idées peuvent être communiquées (classes fermées, écoles fermées).

Le libre accès de l'enfant aux moyens de communication a fait sauter les barrières artificielles de la classe et de l'emploi du temps, et "apporté" le futur à la communauté. Les élèves ont organisé des débats et des expositions quand ils l'ont voulu. Ils ont souvent utilisé les couloirs de l'école pour expérimenter avec des affiches et des questionnaires. Ils ont décidé quand sortir de l'école pour enquêter sur des idées et en discuter (par exemple à l'aide d'enregistreurs) avec des gens de la communauté.

Dans la plupart des cas, le système scolaire a été source de conflits. Ces conflits ont eu du bon dans la mesure où le principe de la scolarité a été ouvertement remis en cause, à la lumière de la philosophie contradictoire du projet sur le futur, par les enfants jouant les protagonistes dans les discussions. Ainsi, les élèves ont refusé de s'associer à une exposition de conférence organisée par l'administration municipale de Naples, quand ils ont appris à une réunion qu'ils ne pourraient ni participer à la conférence, ni exposer leurs travaux comme ils l'entendaient.

Les "écoles spéciales" (par exemple, où le niveau d'éducation est inférieur à la normale) semblent contrôler encore plus que les autres les idées exprimées et les actions. Au Royaume-Uni, les élèves considérés "d'un niveau inférieur à la normale" sont fortement isolés dans ces établissements et on leur enseigne à être passifs et donc "s'insérer dans la société". Le jour où a été lancé le projet sur le futur dans une de ces écoles, on s'est rendu compte que les enfants n'avaient toujours rien dessiné au bout d'une demi-heure, car on avait simplement laissé crayons et papier sur les tables: les élèves n'étaient pas habitués à choisir eux-mêmes les couleurs et attendaient qu'on les leur donne. (Ils étaient également censés boire leur lait à un signal donné, c'est-à-dire au même moment.)

Le changement et la variété étaient considérés dangereux pour eux: on leur faisait souvent chanter la chansonnette "Our Great Unchanging Friend" (Notre grand ami immuable). Pourtant, les idées et images qu'ils

ont exprimées ont dénoté une capacité de comprendre le changement et d'y faire face. Tout au long du projet du Gruppo Futuro et des travaux d'un groupement parallèle (la Cooperativa Monte Olimpino, dans le nord de l'Italie), les films, diaporamas, enregistrements vidéo, poèmes et autres productions semblables d'élèves "d'un niveau inférieur à la normale" ou "difficiles" ont démontré autant de créativité que chez les élèves "normaux". Ces projets contribuent à renverser les mythes couramment entretenus à propos des aptitudes des enfants "favorisés" ou "défavorisés". Dans la plupart des "projets sur le futur" entrepris avec des enfants, on tend à prendre pour participants des "enfants doués" (vus comme des meneurs en puissance, seuls ces derniers ont le loisir de proposer des solutions de rechange). Cette attitude, à l'instar de l'isolement des élèves "d'un niveau inférieur à la normale" dans des "écoles spéciales", va à l'encontre de la participation de l'enfance au futur, qui devrait être suivie, s'intégrer à la réalité et comprendre tout le monde, pas seulement une "élite".

UN MONDE NOUVEAU

Si la participation de l'enfance à la préparation de l'avenir ne se limitait pas à des initiatives du genre Gruppo Futuro ou autres et devait devenir une réalité, quels seraient alors les changements sur les plans politique, social, culturel?

Dans un système permettant une collaboration et une expression plus libre, les idées et les images que les enfants se font du futur sont radicalement différentes de celles des adultes. Ceux du Gruppo Futuro ont proposé, débattu, conçu et présenté sous forme de diaporamas des projets comme:

- au lieu de la télévision, un théâtre de 50 km de large où tout le monde joue;
- la possibilité d'une guerre civile et la destruction de toutes les sources de produits alimentaires autres que les racines ("nous devrions aller dans la campagne pour en discuter aujourd'hui avec les fermiers");
- le repeuplement de la campagne (des régions rurales);
- la collaboration entre enfants et personnes âgées;
- l'utilisation de montgolfières, de soucoupes volantes de poche (rechargeables), de chevaux, de téléphériques, comme moyens de transport;
- la communication par télévision à voies multiples et par tambours.

Ces solutions sont actuellement limitées, c'est-à-dire qu'il s'agit d'idées que la plupart des adultes considèrent "amusantes" et irréalisables. Cependant, l'élargissement de la participation au futur dans l'espace et dans le temps suppose que les adultes changent profondément leur façon de voir l'enfance. Les enfants deviennent des innovateurs culturels et des protagonistes dans une société où leurs opinions et idées sont aussi

valables que celles des grandes personnes. L'apprentissage et la communication culturelle ne deviennent plus une opération à sens unique, d'adulte à enfant, mais multilatérale: le jeune peut "apprendre" au jeune, au moins jeune, au vieux, etc., d'une manière infiniment variée.

L'orientation externe de la participation de l'enfant au futur semble laisser entrevoir la lente désagrégation de l'école en tant que centre d'apprentissage et d'"information", et son remplacement par la communauté. L'apprentissage devient donc partie intégrante de la vie, la théorie de la pratique.

Enfin, le processus de la participation au futur élargit le champ critique de la conscience, de la sensibilité et, partant, des choix et changements concrets. Des changements apparaissent possibles par le biais de la collaboration: chacun participe à la conception et au façonnement d'un nouveau futur, d'utopies souhaitées, visées et changeant continuellement chemin faisant. Ceci suppose une nouvelle conception et conscience politique allant à l'encontre de toutes les propositions actuelles des grands partis politiques italiens et britanniques: leurs manifestes sont périmés.

Les enfants inventeraient-ils un Harrisburg?

"Utopia - non subire il ricatto del'dato, del non realistico, slargare il concetto di possibile fino al limite del nostro desirerio di esitere".

(Utopie - ne pas céder au chantage d'un "donné", d'une non-réalité, élargir le concept du possible jusqu'à la limite de notre désir d'exister.)

(Valeria Frescura)

RENVOIS

Pour de plus amples renseignements sur ce projet, voir Alternative Futures: The Journal of Utopian Studies, Vol. 2, nº 3, été 1979 (Human Dimensions Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, 12181).

On peut également s'informer sur les sujets suivants, auprès de:

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ORGANISER DES POSSIBILITES DE JEUX POUR L'ENFANT

par Polly Hill

Service consultatif sur le cadre de vie de l'enfant
Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement
Association internationale des terrains de jeux
Commission canadienne pour l'Année internationale de l'enfant

Avant l'action vient la planification; avant la planification vient le besoin. A mes yeux, certains de nos besoins s'avèrent des facteurs qui entravent et contrecarrent la création de possibilités de jeux. Ceux qui se font l'avocat de l'enfant doivent se montrer plus résolus à surmonter ces obstacles; nous devons montrer la voie d'une manière plus agressive. On peut assurer la diffusion d'idées valables et l'essor de programmes d'action efficaces en intensifiant les communications entre toutes ces personnes dévouées dans le monde entier. J'aimerais énumérer certaines des raisons que j'ai trouvées à l'insuffisance d'installations de jeux pour enfants; j'exposerai aussi certains moyens de répondre aux besoins que je discerne. Je dois préciser que, même si je m'inspire surtout de l'expérience canadienne, les problèmes et les parades valent pour toute la communauté internationale.

I. LES FACTEURS QUI CONTRECARRENT DANS LE MONDE ENTIER LA CREATION DE POSSIBILITES DE JEUX POUR L'ENFANT

1. La société est insensible à l'importance du jeu et ignore sa valeur éducative dans la vie de l'enfant.
2. Les spécialistes sont les seuls à connaître l'importance du jeu; les responsables des changements n'y sont que trop faiblement sensibilisés.
3. Il y a trop peu de modèles dont s'inspirer.
4. Les aménageurs sont très peu incités à prévoir des aires de jeux, particulièrement de qualité, dans leurs projets.
5. Les normes municipales sont davantage axées sur la rentabilité des aménagements que sur la qualité de la vie. Le coût d'entretien des parcs est une considération qui passe avant la valeur du jeu et la satisfaction de l'usager.
6. Les organismes gouvernementaux comme la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement ont relâché leur emprise en se désaisissant du contrôle, en se contentant d'assurer des prêts par d'autres organismes sans négocier la qualité, renforcer les normes et contrôler leur application.
7. Dans le cas des logements pour familles à faible revenu, on ne calcule pas la rentabilité à long terme ou les avantages sur toute une vie. Forte densité et prix abordable sont des considérations défavorables à l'enfant; un toit au-dessus de sa tête devient le maximum, non le minimum.

8. L'échelle de beaucoup de nos villes est déshumanisante. Bien des formes d'habitation actuellement admises, comme les grands immeubles ou les maisons basses collées les unes contre les autres, ne comportent pas d'aires de jeux et ne conviennent pas à la vie familiale.

9. Les précieux terrains scolaires, qui constituent souvent les seuls espaces libres dans les vieilles communautés, sont conçus uniquement pour le développement physique des enfants, comme s'ils étaient tous des singes ou des athlètes en puissance.

10. On accorde trop d'importance et affecte une trop grande part de nos ressources financières aux sports de compétition et aux activités organisées, structurées - au détriment du jeu libre.

11. On accorde une faible priorité à l'aménagement et l'entretien d'aires de jeux. Au Canada, nous dépensons d'énormes sommes pour vénérer les morts et flatter la sensibilité esthétique des adultes, et presque rien pour satisfaire l'appétit de la génération montante. Combien de fois voyons-nous un cimetière laissé à l'abandon, un monument public mal entretenu ou un boulevard bordé d'arbres pas soigné?

12. Le financement de l'amélioration des quartiers est mal contrôlé. Des millions de dollars ont été consacrés à l'amélioration d'installations récréatives dans le cadre du Programme d'amélioration des quartiers de la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (l'organisme de logement du Canada); toutefois, des études révèlent que la plus grosse partie de l'argent a servi à peindre les balançoires. J'appelle cela farder les erreurs passées. Le financement ne s'est pas appuyé sur un contrôle de l'aménagement, comme en Suède.[1]

13. Offrir des possibilités de jeux est envisagé après-coup; les installations voulues ne sont pas planifiées en même temps que l'infrastructure et l'aménagement préliminaire, ni intégrées dans les structures sociales de la communauté. Prévoir des moyens de jeu entre en soi dans l'aménagement urbain et communautaire.

14. Les coupures en période de restriction sont opérées en fonction des mauvaises priorités. On préfère fournir des patinoires de hockey afin qu'une poignée de nos jeunes les plus talentueux puisse continuer à rivaliser sur le plan international, plutôt qu'offrir davantage de possibilités à un plus grand nombre d'enfants.

15. La priorité donnée à la voiture en Amérique du nord empêche de bien aménager la superficie et de bien contrôler la circulation du point de vue de l'enfant, même si nous tuons ou estropions chaque année plus d'enfants que n'importe quelle grande épidémie au cours de l'histoire.

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[1] Voir dans ce rapport l'exposé de Steen B. Esbensen, intitulé "Les Aires de jeux pour enfants dans le milieu d'habitation: législations et lignes directrices".

II. CE QUE NOUS DEVONS AUX SPECIALISTES; LA OU ILS PECHENT PAR LACUNE

A mon avis, nous connaissons maintenant suffisamment les besoins en matière de développement de l'enfant et le rôle du jeu dans son plein épanouissement, mais cette connaissance semble mal placée. Bien entendu, il existe différentes théories sur le développement de l'enfant, différentes façons d'assurer son apprentissage ou différents moyens de promouvoir son plein épanouissement; cependant, même les théoriciens et les spécialistes les plus partagés conviennent que le jeu est important. Les enfants semblent tous jouer et, s'ils y sont totalement empêchés par des problèmes de santé ou affectifs, des contraintes économiques ou sociales, quelque chose de fondamental fait défaut. Nous pouvons donc supposer qu'il existe une somme de connaissances sur l'importance du jeu pour l'enfant: en quoi il consiste; son rôle dans le bon développement de l'enfant; où, quand et comment ce dernier joue. Malheureusement, ce savoir ne semble pas être en la possession de ceux par qui le changement arrive; il n'a pas été communiqué aux personnes pouvant veiller à ce que des possibilités de jeux soient offertes à l'enfant, car il est détenu par un groupe relativement silencieux de gens dévoués. Ceux qui comprennent bien le phénomène du jeu et en apprécient l'importance paraissent être de piètres avocats; ils ne protestent pas, ne brandissent pas de pancartes ou ne poursuivent pas de campagne de révolte contre le mépris ou la négligence dont est l'objet le droit de jouer de l'enfant.

Qui sont ces gens? Ce sont des parents, des professeurs, des préposés à l'enfance, des animateurs de jeu, des pédagogues, des psychologues, des docteurs et des personnes oeuvrant dans les secteurs des loisirs, de la santé, de la vie familiale, des services correctionnels, du bien-être et du logement familial. Il y a dans le monde des organisations importantes, des organismes gouvernementaux et des gens qui accordent une haute priorité au jeu. Pourtant, certaines seulement de ces personnes - pas toutes - cherchent à se faire entendre. Beaucoup luttent énergiquement pour leurs droits, leur statut, leur intérêt socio-économique, mais rarement suffisamment pour les droits de l'enfance.

III. PAS VERS UNE ACTION INTERNATIONALE

1. Rassembler l'information et constituer des ressources

a) Les gouvernements nationaux et locaux ont ici un rôle à jouer. Chaque pays devrait avoir un centre-ressource financièrement capable de servir de mécanisme pour le recueil, la diffusion et l'échange de l'information pertinente. Les centres fédéraux doivent faire un travail énergique de collecte, de recherche, d'expérimentation et d'innovation pour la communication des données. La connaissance qui existe peut être occulte ou ne viser qu'un petit nombre d'enfants. Les autorités et le grand public sont en droit d'en profiter.

Le Canada dispose de deux centres de ce genre: le Service consultatif sur la cadre de vie de l'enfant auprès de la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement, et Loisirs Canada auprès de la division de la

Condition physique et du Sport amateur du ministère de la Santé et du bien-être social. Ces deux centres-ressource canadiens sont dans une position financière très précaire et manquent de ressources humaines.

J'ai toujours soutenu, à la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement, que si nous voulons apporter des changements propres à améliorer la situation, nous devons oeuvrer à la fois à partir du bas et du haut. Il faut à tout prix que nous soyons nous-mêmes informés, souples et ouverts aux idées nouvelles - tout en reconnaissant les anciennes qui sont valables - ce afin de nous faire les avocats démonstratifs d'une cause vitale.

Les paliers inférieurs de gouvernement ont également besoin de centres d'information et de financement. Certains pays en ont déjà créés, au niveau provincial, pour venir en aide aux municipalités et associations communautaires. L'Ontario, avec son centre-ressource et son programme de subventions, est un exemple notable.[2] A l'échelon municipal, il importe également que soient recueillies toutes les données pertinentes de manière à ce que l'action soit la plus éclairée possible.

b) Les organisations non-gouvernementales sont aussi une importante source de données et servent en fait de réseaux d'information. On peut citer par exemple le Conseil canadien de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, et des organismes spécialisés comme les 4H Clubs et les Clubs des garçons et filles. Chaque pays possède ses institutions non-gouvernementales dont les compétences spéciales sont à exploiter en sus des ressources publiques.

c) Les fondations privées, qui assurent un financement vital, ont également un rôle important à jouer dans cette collecte de données.

d) Les nations doivent oeuvrer par-delà leurs frontières; il leur faut exploiter et appuyer à fond les organisations (comme l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux), les colloques et les conférences de la communauté internationale. Elles devraient en outre procéder à l'échange de représentants afin d'élargir le champ des connaissances et de profiter de l'expérience, bonne ou mauvaise, des autres. L'Année internationale de l'enfant est l'occasion de tirer parti de la sensibilisation mondiale, de susciter une interaction fructueuse au travers d'échanges nationaux et internationaux, et d'inspirer des programmes d'action à long terme qui iront droit à la base du problème: l'enfant; l'enfant qui joue maintenant dans la rue.

2. Sensibiliser, diffuser l'information et montrer la voie dans le domaine des solutions d'aménagement

L'effort de sensibilisation doit être impétueux. Le temps presse. Nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre de gaspiller terrain, temps ou argent sur des solutions inadaptées. Il nous faut former un public éclairé, une "masse critique" - comme dit Barbara Ward, l'éminente économiste anglaise - qui va exiger pour ses enfants un meilleur cadre de jeu.

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[2] Voir dans ce rapport l'exposé de Alexandra Semeniuk, intitulé "Un endroit pour vivre, un endroit pour grandir: La place que l'Ontario fait au droit de jouer de l'enfant."

Montrer une meilleure voie incombe aux groupes-ressource. Les parents les plus attentionnés ne sont souvent pas au courant des possibilités, de l'éventail des expériences de jeu pouvant être offertes, ou même de l'utilité du jeu dans le développement global de l'enfant. Il s'agit d'utiliser tous genres de moyens de communication: média, documents écrits et audio-visuels, expositions, conférences, réunions de petits groupes d'étude.

La recherche offre des moyens d'action. Maintenant que l'ordinateur est roi, les faits, statistiques, étalons et comparaisons semblent être la façon de convaincre les pragmatistes, les sceptiques et les Thomas, ceux qui disent: "On n'a jamais fait autant de chichi dans mon enfance. Je jouais, c'est tout."

Cet effort de sensibilisation doit atteindre parents et enfants. L'enfant aussi a une conception très figée des terrains de jeux, car il n'a jamais connu l'éventail des possibilités; ainsi, la plupart du temps, il ne sait rien du terrain de jeu d'aventure et n'imagine pas que les grandes personnes puissent le laisser avoir des installations non conventionnelles. Il faut l'informer lui aussi, et l'intégrer au processus.

Il nous faut ensuite atteindre, peut-être d'une façon différente, les spécialistes qui veulent s'ériger des monuments. Ils sont portés à utiliser leur créativité, mais pas à stimuler celle de l'enfant.

D'autres cercles qui requièrent une démarche spéciale sont les autorités publiques ou les aménageurs privés chargés d'organiser les possibilités de jeux. Souvent, ils se méfient des "innovations", se soucient de l'entretien, se laissent arrêter par le vandalisme. Même leur résistance tenace ne doit pas pouvoir dissuader ceux qui se font l'avocat de l'enfant. Il faut poursuivre la croisade. Ces cercles vont réaliser, s'ils font l'essai, que de meilleures installations ne coûtent pas plus cher à la longue; en outre, l'usager sera satisfait et se comportera mieux.

Il s'agit d'arrêter des lignes directrices dans la mesure où les gens commencent à demander comment faire. A la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement, on nous demande souvent des solutions concrètes, même si nous répugnons à en offrir sous forme de manuels d'aménagement ou d'épures. Nous devons pouvoir apporter certaines réponses à ceux qui veulent savoir comment procéder exactement pour la planification ou la construction.

3. Projets de démonstration

Démontrer une solution sur le terrain n'est pas chose aisée; cependant, il est difficile de la faire adopter si l'on ne peut pas l'étudier en pratique et voir les enfants à l'oeuvre. Chaque pays a besoin d'exemples concrets de bonnes solutions ou démarches d'aménagement dont s'inspirer. Nous pouvons beaucoup apprendre d'autres nations, mais tant qu'un projet donné ne sera pas essayé chez soi, les sceptiques diront: "Oh, c'est facile dans un pays socialiste comme la Suède", ou "Ils n'ont pas nos problèmes climatiques", ou encore "Leurs enfants sont plus disciplinés que les nôtres."

Il s'agit de trouver des fonds pour financer les démonstrations et faire connaître les bonnes solutions. Les moyens, par exemple, d'associer l'enfant à l'aménagement et le propriétaire ou locataire à l'aménagement et l'entretien peuvent être divulgués par le biais des divers centres-ressource. C'est ce que fait l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux dans le cadre de son programme pour l'Année internationale de l'enfant. De plus en plus d'administrations publiques associent des groupements communautaires au processus en cours, en obtenant de bons résultats.

IV. ORGANISER L'ACTION

En tant qu'avocate du jeu pour l'enfant, je vois un monde avec davantage de problèmes et moins d'argent pour y remédier. Je touche à beaucoup de choses: j'ai mon poste au gouvernement fédéral, j'assure la liaison avec le comité interministériel pour l'Année internationale de l'enfant, et je travaille en collaboration avec la Commission canadienne pour l'Année internationale de l'enfant, composée principalement de représentants d'organisations non-gouvernementales, du monde du travail et de l'industrie. J'oeuvre aussi depuis bien des années au sein d'une organisation nationale, interdisciplinaire et non-gouvernementale, pour l'enfance: le Conseil canadien de l'enfance et de la jeunesse. Je suis actuellement présidente d'une organisation internationale, interdisciplinaire et non-gouvernementale: l'Association internationale des terrains de jeux. Toutes travaillent dans l'intérêt de l'enfant; toutes travaillent en partie ou à fond dans l'intérêt du jeu; elles sont comme les parties d'un orchestre. L'action orchestrée au Canada a consisté en un effort conscient pour atteindre les "personnes agissantes", ou susceptibles d'agir, à tous les niveaux: "les gens" (importants et modestes), les divers paliers de gouvernement, les O.N.G., les spécialistes en matière de logement (construction et gestion), de planification, de loisirs, de santé, de protection de l'enfant, et les étudiants en formation. Je ne suis certainement pas le chef d'orchestre, mais plus probablement le maître de concert, qui veille sur les parties et leurs relations entre elles, et est responsable en quelque sorte de leur bon mariage. Je suis en mesure de discerner consonances et dissonances, et de voir failles et interdépendances.

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LES BESOINS DE L'ENFANT ET LES RELATIONS ENFANT-MILIEU

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INTRODUCTION

Cet exposé va apporter certains renseignements du point de vue néo-zélandais, et soulever des questions que l'auteur juge essentielles à propos de l'aménagement urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. A mesure que l'enfant grandit, il interagit avec différentes unités d'espace - pièce, maison, groupe de maisons, etc. L'importance de ces trois premiers éléments spatiaux dans le développement de l'enfant se confirme. L'auteur traite des besoins de l'enfance en illustrant au moyen d'exemples néo-zélandais comment l'opinion de l'enfant et sa participation directe aux décisions, si il était encouragé dans ce sens, pourraient modifier le milieu urbain.

En conclusion, l'exposé avance qu'il est possible de mieux exploiter les organisations existant déjà pour aménager l'espace urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. Il invite à la prudence, même ceux qui considèrent que la Nouvelle-Zélande, avec ses trois millions d'habitants, est idéale du point de vue dimension démographique et mélange de milieux naturels et artificiels: les problèmes sociaux que connaissent les enfants et les jeunes néo-zélandais n'existeraient pas si nos centres urbains répondaient à leurs besoins.

RELATIONS MILIEU-ENFANT

Lorsque nous considérons la ville comme un lieu où des enfants sont appelés à grandir, nous devons bien nous rappeler l'évolution de chaque enfant au fil des ans. Combien de fois, par exemple, oublions-nous les différences entre l'enfant de deux ans et celui de cinq ou six ans, quand nous parlons de "l'enfant"? Les conclusions peuvent-elles s'appliquer indifférem-

ment aux enfants de tous âges? Dans la négative (et il pourrait être déraisonnable de s'attendre au contraire), pouvons-nous tirer d'autres conclusions qui vont s'appliquer aux âges non visés? Chose encore plus importante, compte tenu de notre intérêt pour le milieu urbain, considérons-nous les phases dans la vie de l'enfant en rapport avec les unités d'espace urbain?

En soulevant ces questions, je pense aux travaux de Erikson et de Doxiadis. Le second s'est inspiré du premier, et d'autres sources, pour décomposer le développement humain en douze phases (voir illustration 1).

Doxiadis a de plus lié ces douze phases aux quinze unités ékistiques d'espace (voir illustration 2). A l'aide de ces évaluations des unités d'espace avec lesquelles toute personne entre en contact à chaque phase du développement, Doxiadis démontre le peu de connaissance qu'un enfant de moins de quatre ans a du milieu urbain.

Aux âges où les facultés de l'enfant se développent le plus rapidement, le milieu environnant est principalement le foyer; le foyer en tant qu'environnement doit donc retenir notre attention plus que tout autre élément, si nous voulons favoriser au maximum le développement intellectuel de l'enfant.

Selon le rapport Familie und Wohnen (habitation et vie familiale), "certains aspects du développement social sont plus sensibles aux conditions d'habitation que d'autres". Par exemple, on prétend que le sentiment profond de confiance et que la faculté d'aimer ne dépendent pas en eux-mêmes de la taille du domicile, même si le stress parental imputable à ce facteur peut inhiber le développement de la confiance et de l'amour. De même, des facteurs écologiques (comme le manque d'espace) peuvent empêcher le plein épanouissement de la faculté d'apprendre et de l'intelligence.

Erikson a lié ses travaux psychoanalytiques à des questions d'agencement spatial. Sa matrice des phases de l'existence et des crises psychosociales (voir illustration 3) nous fournit un modèle précieux si elle est utilisée de pair avec celle de Doxiadis. Les flèches verticales indiquent l'importance suivie de l'attribut cité qui se forme à la phase correspondante de l'existence. Erikson soutient que cette continuité psychologique signifie que "à chaque phase, un certain aspect de l'environnement architectural se transmet à la génération suivante, devient partie intégrante de ses tensions et ses conflits, et contribue aux perturbations auxquelles sont enclines les personnes et les groupes" (Doxiadis, 1974; p. 315).

Il donne deux exemples pour illustrer son propos:

> Si la relation du nourrisson avec son gardien maternel doit comporter une certaine part de confiance par opposition à la défiance, alors la défiance d'une mère à l'égard de son propre milieu et son profond mécontentement de sa situation dans le cadre spatial vont manifestement restreindre sa capacité d'inspirer confiance (p. 314).

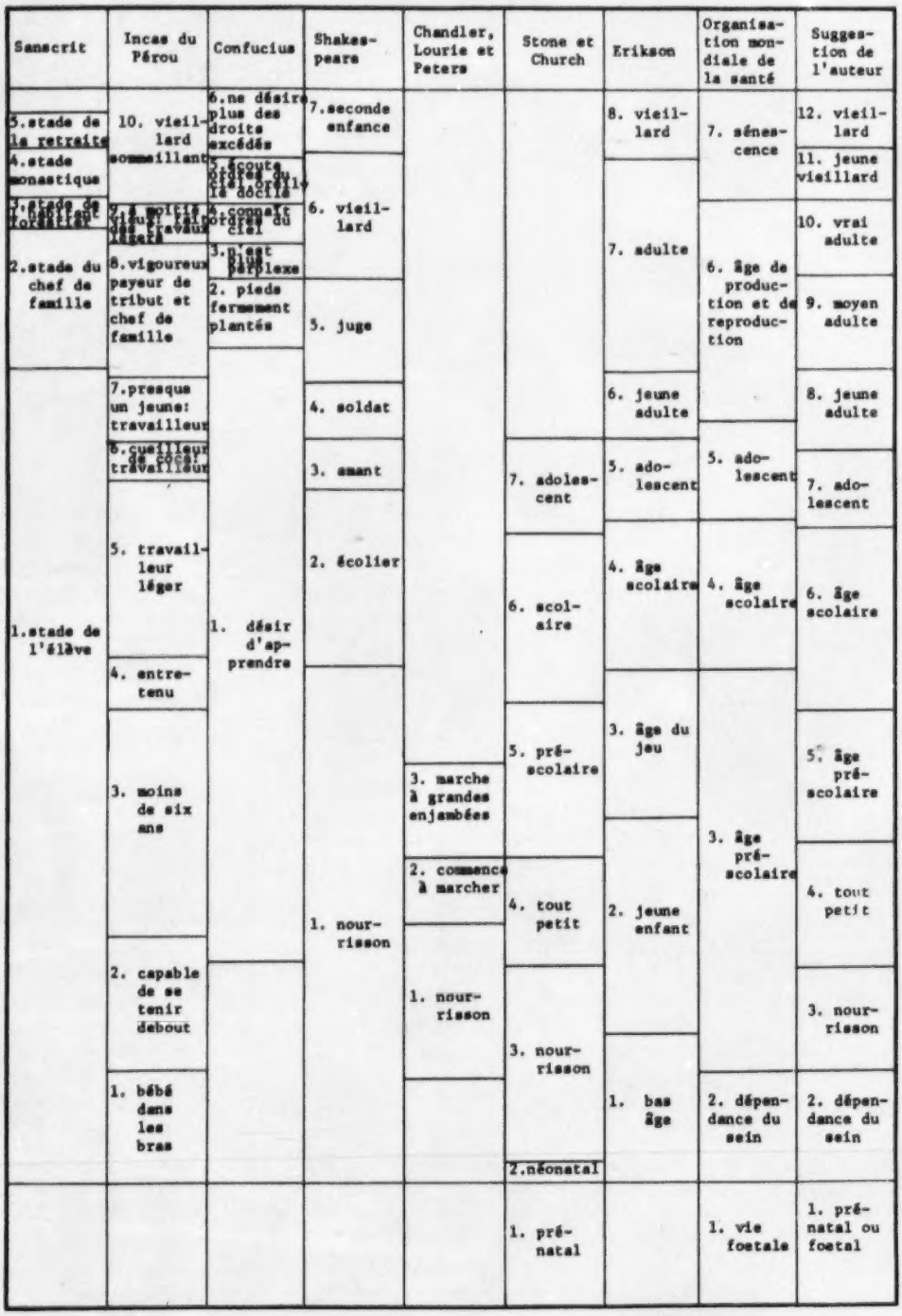

Illustration 1. Plusieurs conceptions des phases du développement humain (Doxiadis, 1974, 57)

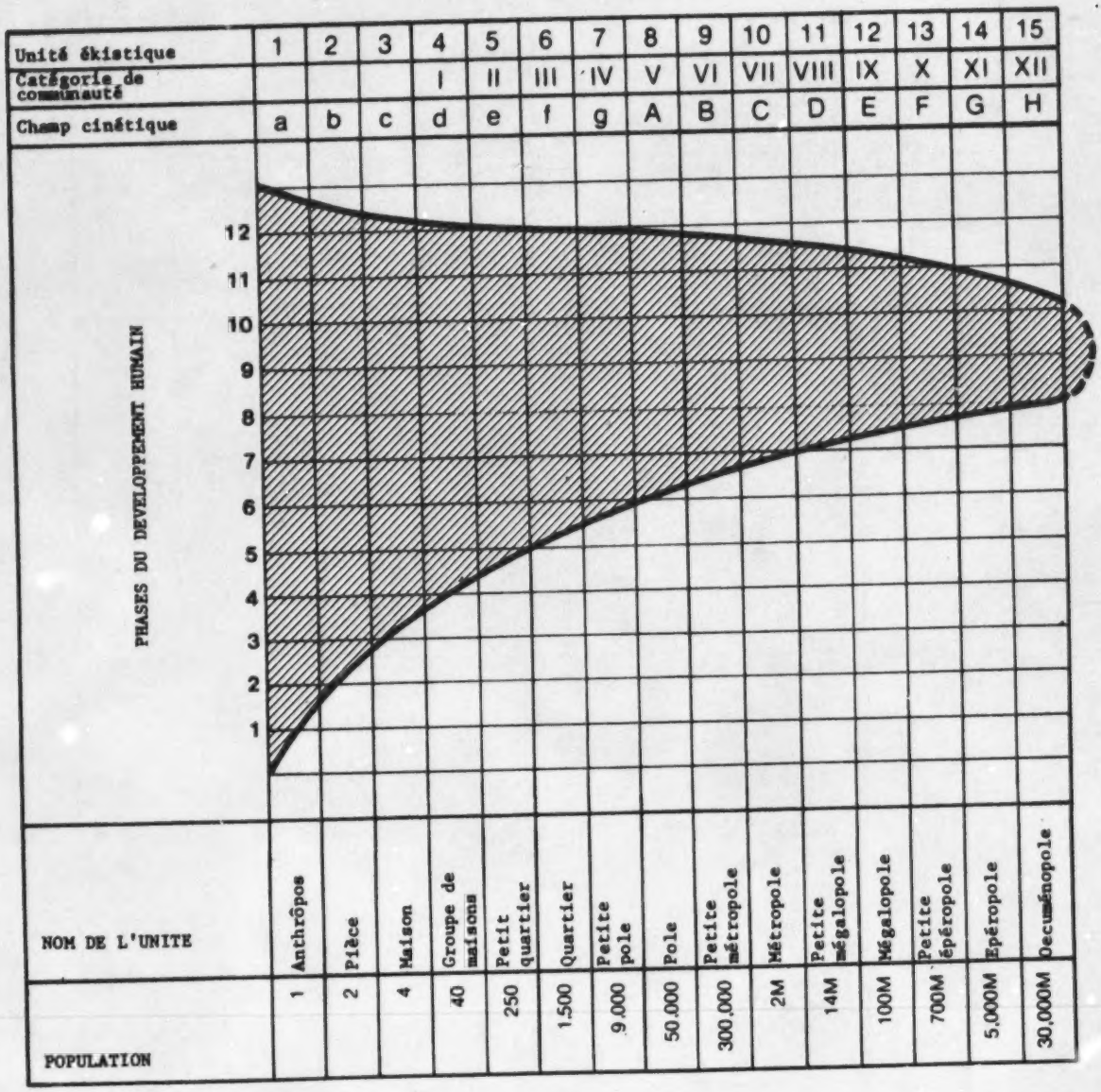

Illustration 2. Mobilité spatiale suivant les phases du développement
Conquête du monde, puis repli (Doxiadis, 1974: 63)

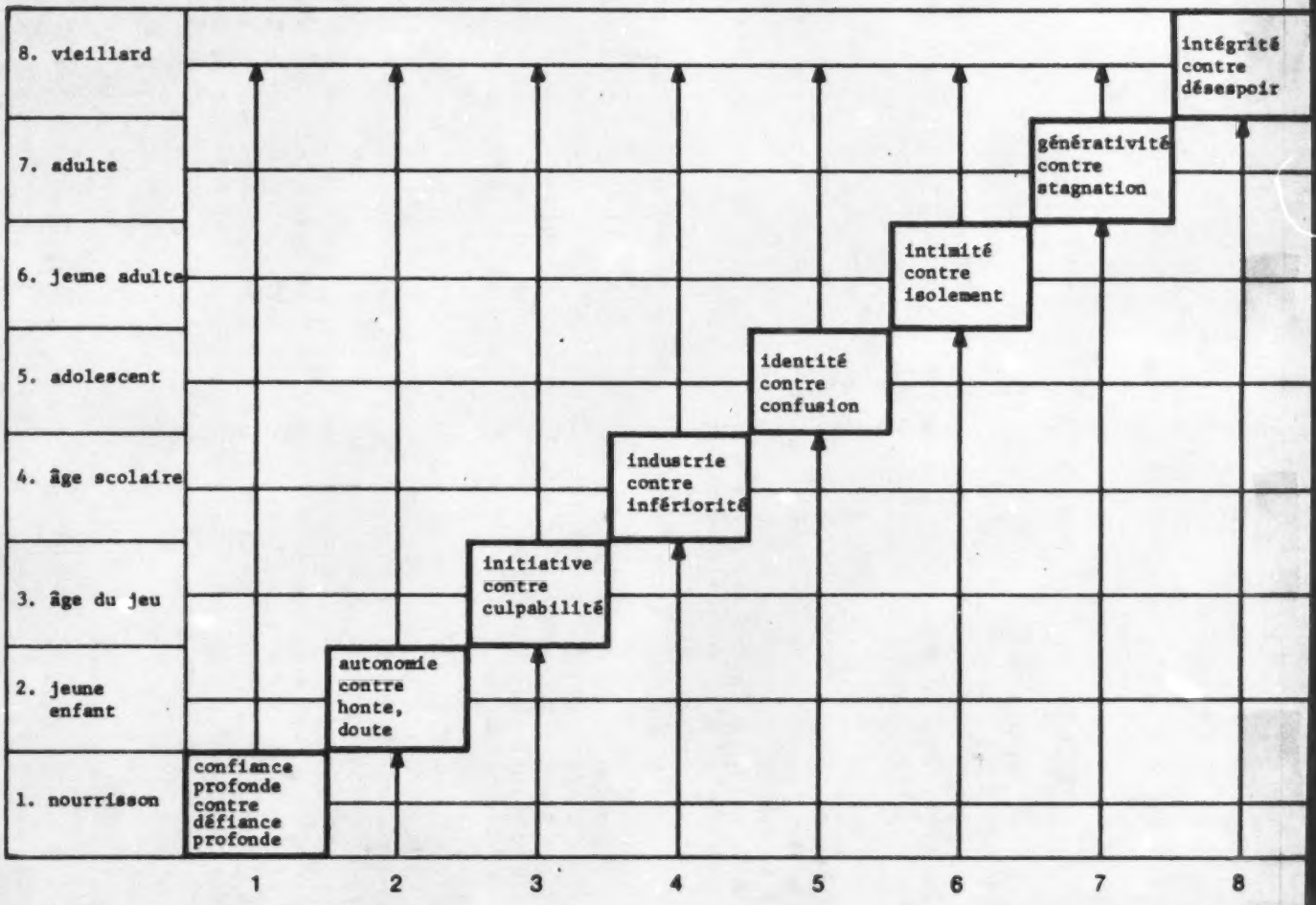

Illustration 3. Crises psychosociales au cours de la vie (Doxiadis, 1974: 314)

> ... Si, dans la phase "initiative contre culpabilité", on fait habituellement sentir à un enfant qu'il est un mauvais enfant parce qu'il utilise l'espace pour jouer et explorer et ignore les avertissements qu'il n'a pas compris, on assiste à un renforcement environnemental du sentiment inhibiteur de culpabilité que les parents instillent à l'enfant, au lieu de rendre le monde - autant que possible - sûr et explicable (p. 315).

Erikson entrevoit la perspective excitante de "... aménager un milieu urbain favorable à l'homme, au lieu d'un milieu aliénant" (p. 315). Il pense ici à des possibilités sur les plans développement et créativité, à des gens ayant le sentiment de participer, actifs, incités à participer et "sensibilisés" (p. 315). Voilà des objectifs valables.

On peut voir que les éléments d'un milieu urbain favorable, tel que le définit Erikson, s'appliquent à chaque unité ékistique d'espace. Le milieu auquel on réfère dans le premier exemple ci-dessus (le nourrisson) est le foyer (unités ékistiques 1 à 4, peut-être 5). Si le second exemple vise un enfant d'âge scolaire (de 6 à 12 ans), le milieu urbain déborde alors le quartier et s'étend jusqu'au niveau de la ville (unité ékistique 7).

Doxiadis a représenté sous forme de graphique trois aspects de la relation espace-vie (temps, temps cumulatif, type de mouvement), et dressé un tableau d'ensemble. Il démontre que, à mesure que l'enfant grandit, sa perspective s'élargit et l'amène à utiliser des unités de plus en plus grandes. Par exemple, à la différence du nouveau-né, l'enfant de deux ans commence à avoir des expériences importantes avec son voisinage; la vie de celui de cinq ans englobe encore davantage, et celui de dix ans a probablement au moins une certaine idée du milieu métropolitain. La caractéristique la plus frappante du pourcentage cumulatif de temps passé dans chaque unité ékistique à la phase 7 (adolescent - 13 à 18 ans) est la place importante des trois premières unités. Bien que ses horizons soient relativement larges, cet enfant plus âgé passe plus de la moitié de son temps aux alentours du foyer. Si l'on considère comme significatif le temps que l'enfance passe dans diverses sortes de milieux, l'analyse de Doxiadis fait alors ressortir la nécessité d'accroître nos efforts en vue d'améliorer le foyer et ses environs immédiats. Toutefois, cette conclusion ne doit pas nous amener à négliger les besoins particuliers des jeunes à d'autres phases, comme les tout petits et les enfants d'âge scolaire.

LES BESOINS DE L'ENFANT

Doxiadis nous indique que les adolescents constituent le groupe de jeunes le plus exposé au milieu urbain. Ce groupe est également celui qui connaît le plus de problèmes psychologiques du fait de la "croissance"; néanmoins, chez la population non-adulte, il est aussi le mieux armé sur le plan intellectuel pour comprendre et articuler ses besoins. Le fait-il? Qui écoute?

Récemment, un journal publiait un reportage sur le conseil scolaire d'Auckland, qui met en relief certaines facettes du problème (New Zealand Herald du 12 mai, 1979). Un article cite un rapport présenté à une réunion du conseil et faisant état d'un accroissement important des cas de vandalisme dans les écoles primaires: 866 au cours des quatre premiers mois de l'année, contre 365 l'année précédente. A l'occasion de cette même réunion, les membres du conseil ont étudié la démarche d'une station de radio locale qui voulait que les enfants appellent pour faire part de leurs "opinions, compte rendu de lectures ou questions à propos d'animaux familiers". Voilà un vrai moyen pour les enfants et les jeunes de s'exprimer! Le conseil, cependant, a décidé de ne pas autoriser les élèves du primaire à participer à l'émission durant les heures de classe: "Ce que (les élèves font) après (est) l'affaire des parents". Il a par ailleurs permis à une école d'écourter de 30 minutes l'heure du déjeuner - et la journée de classe - à l'occasion de travaux de construction effectués sur place, "par égard pour la santé d'esprit des professeurs et les vêtements des enfants". Peut-être que ces élèves vont en profiter pour appeler la station de radio ou saccager de nouveau les installations scolaires!

Je donne ces exemples parce que les Néo-Zélandais croient (en général) que leur pays est "un endroit idéal pour élever des enfants". Dans leur récent ouvrage intitulé Growing Up in New Zealand, Jane et Jim Ritchie donnent d'ailleurs à leur dernier chapitre ce titre qui est essentiellement un point de vue d'adulte. Ils expliquent pourquoi en parlant de l'enfance:

> Pour nous, et la plupart des gens consultés, l'enfance - notamment dans les premières années - était le temps où parents et enfants vivaient des tas d'expériences enchanteresses: on faisait de nouvelles choses ensemble durant les vacances, à la montagne ou à la plage; on apprenait des tranches d'histoire locale auprès de vieilles gens et de membres de la famille, flânait dans les boutiques de brocanteurs, allait se promener ou pêcher sur les quais, explorait les mille et un recoins des villes. Chemin faisant, on rencontrait toutes sortes de personnes dont on apprenait des tas de choses. Apprendre, ce n'est pas seulement aller à l'école - nous imaginons un milieu où chacun est à la fois apprenti et professeur ... (p. 175).

Exposant en quoi la distinction entre milieux urbain et rural est floue en Nouvelle-Zélande, ils expliquent que la "qualité de la vie" ne se mesure pas en terme d'opéras, de ballets ou de musées d'art, mais par l'accès au milieu naturel: fermes, forêts, lacs, plages de l'océan. Ils soulignent également que la planification pour les enfants dans les villes de Nouvelle-Zélande n'intervient généralement qu'après-coup: "Si les enfants se constituaient en groupe de pression politique, les urbanistes trouveraient peut-être une multitude de façons d'améliorer le milieu urbain dans leur intérêt" (p. 177). Ce qu'ils ne disent pas, c'est qu'en Nouvelle-Zélande, 65% des enfants de moins de 15 ans vivent dans 24 centres urbains comptant 20 000 habitants ou plus.

Gerhard Rosenberg est du même avis que Ritchie quand il décrit les dissertations rédigées par des adolescents, dans son ouvrage "Adolescent Needs in the Urban Environment" (SET 78). Voici la conclusion à laquelle il aboutit à propos du centre urbain: "Cependant, en règle générale, la ville néglige l'enfant sauf, peut-être, durant les vacances". Une citation de Rosenberg est particulièrement pertinente, à la lumière des comptes rendus de journal susmentionnés:

> De quoi avons-nous vraiment besoin? Nous avons besoin d'un cinéma, d'une patinoire, de bons parcs et peut-être même d'un centre communautaire. Un tas d'autres choses pourraient être utiles, mais nous avons besoin avant tout de celles-là, car tout le monde s'ennuie et commet des bêtises.

Et nous nous retrouvons à considérer "les choses à faire pour les enfants" à l'échelon de la ville. Le problème là encore, est l'espace géographique et ce qui va avec. Mais bien entendu, à la lumière des précédentes réflexions sur les relations enfant-milieu, nous comprenons que ce qui peut convenir à un groupe d'âge à un endroit et à un moment donnés peut fort bien ne pas convenir à tous les groupes. Néanmoins, il est clair que nos communautés urbaines "doivent offrir un éventail suffisamment varié de conditions à l'enfant" (Rene Dubos, dans Doxiadis, 1974; p. 333).

Toutefois, notre expérience en Nouvelle-Zélande confirme qu'il ne suffit pas d'offrir de la variété et des possibilités. Chaque enfant a besoin de se sentir en confiance avant d'essayer de nouvelles possibilités. Les adultes doivent donc habituer l'enfant à s'adapter à de nouvelles situations afin qu'il puisse exploiter pleinement une large gamme de conditions. De toute évidence, il ne suffit donc pas d'aménager l'espace urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant; il faut aussi songer aux moyens de permettre à ce dernier d'apprécier les possibilités offertes par le processus d'aménagement, et d'en profiter au maximum.

LA PRISE DES DECISIONS: QUI, OU, POURQUOI ET COMMENT?

Les enfants ne sont pas exclus a priori de la prise des décisions, mais on ne les encourage pas à y participer. La condition d'enfant est en elle-même un obstacle manifeste. Comme on l'a dit, Jane et Jim Ritchie ont songé à la constitution possible d'un groupe de pression politique par les enfants. Devrions-nous penser plus soigneusement à la façon d'obtenir des renseignements de l'enfant et de les communiquer aux décisionnaires? La méthode de Gerhard Rosenberg qui - comme nous l'avons aussi déjà mentionné - demande à des jeunes de rédiger des dissertations peut fournir des renseignements utiles pour la planification. De simples entretiens pourraient convenir dans certains cas. J'ai également découvert que rédiger des histoires et faire des dessins sont des moyens efficaces pour l'enfant d'exprimer ce qu'il pense du milieu. Mes travaux indiquent également que les spécialistes qui prennent les décisions à propos de l'enfance au niveau urbain semblent plus près de comprendre le comportement enfantin que les parents (Fookes, 1974). Toutefois, ce sont les parents, et non les enfants, qui en faisant

pression sur les responsables politiques déterminent si la recommandation de spécialistes va être acceptée et mise en pratique. Par conséquent, il faut aussi éduquer les parents pour qu'ils sachent comment amener leurs enfants à tirer parti des possibilités offertes par le milieu urbain; il faut s'attaquer aux obstacles socio-économiques se dressant dans cette voie.

La participation publique n'est pas entièrement représentative, même du point de vue des adultes. On commence à se préoccuper du fait que les conseils scolaires, par exemple, fixent des heures de réunion qui empêchent la participation des spécialistes, des travailleurs et des ménagères. "Je ne crois pas que le conseil scolaire (de Auckland) devrait toujours être sous la coupe de grands-parents", a récemment déclaré l'un de ses membres (New Zealand Herald du 10 mai 1979). Les adolescents peuvent-ils être aussi représentés au sein de ces conseils?

Nous avons songé à élargir la représentation et, d'une manière plus générale, à améliorer l'acheminement des renseignements, de l'enfant au décisionnaire. Devrions-nous aussi envisager de donner un plus grand rôle dans la planification communautaire à des groupes déjà centrés sur les écoles locales? Nous savons qu'il existe des comités scolaires, ainsi que des comités au niveau de jardins d'enfants et de centres récréatifs en Nouvelle-Zélande. Pourquoi les comités scolaires devraient-ils s'occuper uniquement d'activités scolaires? On en a vu intervenir parce qu'ils étaient préoccupés par les dangers de la circulation et l'implantation projetée d'hôtels et de tavernes. Cette intervention ne pourrait-elle pas s'étendre à la formulation de recommandations à propos de la planification générale, notamment de la prise des décisions visant à offrir "des choses à faire"? Si, par exemple, un comité entendait parler d'un projet de décharge sanitaire qui éliminerait une importante aire de jeux naturelle dans les environs, pourquoi ne s'y opposerait-il pas officiellement en tant que "comité scolaire XYZ"? Rien n'empêche ces groupes de participer au processus plus large de l'urbanisme; pourtant, on ne les a jamais incités à sortir du cadre scolaire. Le processus de planification les intimide peut-être.

Entretemps, les organes consultatifs du gouvernement fournissent au public des renseignements où ils semblent favorables à la cause de l'enfant.

CONCLUSION

Il peut sembler cynique de mettre la Nouvelle-Zélande en parallèle avec des pays plus industrialisés et urbanisés. Nous sommes une petite nation et l'agriculture est le fondement de notre économie. Cependant, plus de 70% des Néo-Zélandais vivent dans des communautés urbaines, de sorte que nos expériences sont peut-être pertinentes.

Je pense que la Nouvelle-Zélande illustre ce que l'on peut accomplir dans des sociétés plus importantes en adoptant de plus petites sous-divisions pour l'aménagement urbain. Doxiadis a été le champion de l'idée de la "communauté humaine", qui désigne les agglomérations ou parties d'agglomérations comptant jusqu'à 50 000 habitants. Si nous planifions nos

opérations d'aménagement à cette échelle et organisons des unités d'action dans ce cadre, comme la Nouvelle-Zélande avec ses comités scolaires et autres associations locales, on a alors des meilleures chances de faire participer parents et enfants de tous âges.

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LETTRE OUVERTE AU MAIRE DE DENVER, COLORADO

par Robert A. Aldrich

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Denver, Colorado, E.-U.

Monsieur le maire,

Le projet dont il s'agit ici va demander à être appliqué sur plusieurs années. Il prétend s'attaquer au problème difficile que beaucoup de villes connaissent et vont devoir sérieusement étudier avant que l'urbanisation dont nous sommes témoins n'en réduise la "dimension humaine" à un point inacceptable. Permettez-moi d'expliquer tout d'abord ce que je propose, et ensuite pourquoi cette façon d'aborder le réaménagement urbain devrait être sérieusement envisagée.

Ce qui se perd à mon avis dans nos métropoles américaines, c'est l'idée qu'une ville devrait être un endroit où familles et enfants se sentent bien et en sécurité. La cité qui ne favorise pas l'enfant n'est fort probablement pas favorable à l'adulte non plus. Je propose donc que les maires de nos grandes villes instituent un programme que j'intitulerai "L'enfant et la ville". Il consisterait à se pencher sur le réseau de gens et d'institutions susceptibles de promouvoir l'apprentissage de l'enfant, sa croissance et son épanouissement physiques, son développement affectif et social, ainsi que son sentiment d'être un participant dans son cadre de vie urbain. En d'autres termes, nous devons nous demander: "Qu'est-ce que la ville a à offrir à l'enfant?" Le programme proprement dit servirait à approfondir plusieurs aspects précis de l'interaction entre l'enfance et son milieu urbain - comme le logement, la scolarité, la santé, les loisirs et les transports - sans toutefois se limiter à ces grands sujets. Il s'agit là de questions complexes qui ne sont pas encore parfaitement comprises, et il va falloir pour cela effectuer des recherches sur les milieux culturels aux Etats-Unis, ainsi que des comparaisons avec d'autres cultures. Le groupement des populations ethniques est un phénomène quasi universel, même quand elles sont transplantées dans un autre pays. Elles conservent des générations durant leurs valeurs, leur langue, leur musique, leur façon de s'habiller et leurs coutumes traditionnelles, avant tout parce que ces institutions rassurent, inspirent une confiance mutuelle et forment un cadre éprouvé pour transmettre les valeurs fondamentales au sein de la famille et du quartier.

Il existe bien des sous-problèmes intéressants à étudier en relation avec l'enfant urbain. J'aimerais en avancer quelques-uns qui ne figurent probablement pas sur notre liste de priorités civiques aux Etats-Unis, mais se voient attribuer une très grande importance dans d'autres pays. Ainsi, le profil de la circulation au sein et au travers des quartiers

d'habitation a un rapport direct avec les blessures et les décès enregistrés chez les enfants; ces accidents inutiles sont la résultante de multiples facteurs, qui peuvent tous être bien mieux contrôlés qu'ils ne l'ont été. De même, la conception des habitations et du mobilier de maison a un rapport direct avec tout un ensemble de blessures et de dommages causés aux enfants: ébouillantements, brûlures par électricité, empoisonnements, chutes sur des coins de meubles, doigts écrasés par des portes et des fenêtres coulissantes, endommagement de l'ouïe par exposition excessive au bruit et, bien entendu, effets à long terme de l'air vicié parfois contaminé par des produits chimiques.

Aujourd'hui, les familles citadines qui ont des enfants à élever se trouvent devant un dur dilemne. D'un côté, il y a du travail et de l'emploi en ville; mais d'un autre côté, étant donné la structure et le fonctionnement du milieu métropolitain, elles ont souvent beaucoup de mal à remplir leurs obligations envers leurs enfants et à assumer convenablement un emploi rémunéré. Rien que les déplacements posent en eux-mêmes un gros problème, car il y a très rarement près des lieux de travail des quartiers conçus et convenant pour les familles et les enfants. Les exigences quotidiennes comme l'approvisionnement en nourriture sont de plus en plus difficiles à satisfaire dans le même quartier de la ville où l'on trouve à la fois du travail et un logement familial approprié. Les familles se fragmentent et les contacts entre parents et enfants tendent à diminuer; de même, les distractions pour parents et enfants se font de plus en plus rares en ville.

Le projet intitulé "L'enfant et la ville" va chercher systématiquement à exploiter la ville comme un cadre constructif et créatif pour l'épanouissement des enfants, des jeunes et de leurs familles. Il va faire en grande partie appel aux services et à la participation de citoyens, plutôt que d'officiels; un aspect clé sera l'association d'enfants aux activités, comme cela s'est fait avec succès il y a dix ans au Canada dans le cadre du projet "Milieu 70". L'organisation de ce projet dans une ville va nécessiter l'aide et l'encouragement de la municipalité, des milieux financiers et d'affaires, des services pédagogiques et des hommes politiques des deux camps. Il s'agit à bien des égards d'un projet "où l'on fait les choses soi-même", à l'image du nettoyage de printemps de sa maison et de son jardin. Si je crois assez fortement en une telle entreprise, c'est qu'elle marche dans quelques villes étrangères, comme Toronto; et ensuite qu'il existe des différences de "vivabilité" notables entre villes américaines, les critères sur ce plan ayant fait couler pas mal d'encre récemment. Enfin, j'ai été impressionné par les conclusions du colloque international sur le futur de l'enfant,[1] qui a vu en 1978 à Athènes les délégués se pencher pendant toute une journée sur la situation de l'enfant urbain. En résumé, la ville offre bien peu de choses à l'enfance; elle est aménagée par des adultes pour des adultes, et donne l'impression que l'enfant n'y a pas sa place.

Pourquoi proposer maintenant un tel projet? Notre pays connaît une situation démographique sans précédent. En effet, le taux de jeunes

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[1] The Child in the World of Tomorrow, éditeur général Spyros A. Doxiadis, D.M., Pergamon Press, 1979.

enfants est très faible à cause de la faiblesse de la natalité, tandis que par ailleurs la population vieillit rapidement. Peu après la fin du siècle, les enfants de trois ans de maintenant auront entre 40 et 45 ans; ils seront en charge des affaires du pays et devront non seulement gérer les activités, mais aussi s'occuper d'une énorme masse de gens de plus de 65 ans qui imposeront de fortes exigences politiques et financières. Bref, l'enfant d'aujourd'hui aura de formidables responsabilités quand il sera adulte. Nous devons donc lui donner le meilleur de ce que nous avons à lui offrir tout au long de son développement. Nous devons lui offrir maintenant les moyens voulus là où il vit et où sa famille travaille, si nous voulons l'équiper pour affronter le XXIe siècle. Comme bien des enfants vivent en ville et que leur proportion ne cesse d'augmenter, les municipalités ne peuvent plus rester inactives devant cette situation difficile. Qu'il suffise de poser cette question: pouvons-nous décrire l'écart entre ce que les villes sont et ce qu'elles pourraient être? Si c'est le cas, nous devrions alors pouvoir prendre des mesures convenables pour améliorer le milieu urbain dans l'intérêt de l'enfant. Enfin, je trouve préoccupant que nous ne semblons pas nous soucier des futures relations de nos enfants actuels avec ceux du reste du monde. Les décisions à cet égard sont principalement entre les mains d'hommes et de femmes d'un certain âge, vivant aujourd'hui: des personnalités politiques, des responsables militaires et des dirigeants industriels qui semblent peu se soucier de faire de bons ancêtres pour la nouvelle génération d'enfants.

J'espère que l'on verra dans cette lettre la tentative de formulation d'une solution clé pour nos villes et notre pays, qui est compréhensible et réalisable. Elle comporte de profondes implications philosophiques et économiques pour chacun d'entre nous et pourrait influer concrètement sur notre entente et notre coopération avec les autres nations.

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